Fashion and Apparel Consumer Behavior

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Introduction

This book aims to provide content specifically discussing consumer behavior related to fashion and apparel. Consumer behavior is a crucial subject in marketing and merchandising. However, because consumers' decisions related to their appearances are largely influenced by their identity, culture, and social environments, the studies of consumer behavior in the fashion/apparel fields need to reflect and emphasize specific areas. The majority of the content in this book has come from another open educational resource, *Introduction to Consumer Behavior* , by Andrea Niosi, as well as other open textbooks, websites, and articles created by Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, Business, and Marketing scholars and authors.

This book is an outcome of a two-year project supported by Iowa State University's Miller Open Education Mini Grant (2023). By Fall 2023 the book was reorganized and two chapters specifically related to apparel and fashion consumers are added. By Fall 2024, the book content will be modified and supplemented with concepts and examples tailored to the books' audience. The project is scheduled to conclude by Spring 2025 with a series of assessment and dissemination. The content will be continuously evaluated and updated.

TOPIC 1. WHAT IS CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Learning Objectives

Upon completing this section, students should:

1. Explain consumer behavior as a process.
2. Describe consumer behavior's role in marketing and fashion.
3. Develop a big-picture view on the scope, related disciplines, and perspectives of consumer behavioral studies.

WHAT IS CONSUMER BEHAVIOR?

Consumer Behavior

The processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires" (Solomon, 2020).

Consumer behavior involves a series of actions at different stages of consumption. For example, consumers might start by seeking recommendations for a product they are interested in buying, and so they compare different brands. Then they might choose to order their product online instead of buying it in person at a brick-and-mortar store. Post purchase and after using the product, consumers might decide to leave a positive comment online. Finally, they might become so emotionally attached to the product that they try to fix it when it is broken!

Consumer behavior is an *ongoing* process that starts long before and continues long after a consumer buys a product, service, or experience (Table 1).

Table 1: The Consumer Behavior Process

	Behavior Example	Possible Consumer Behavior Questions
Pre-Purchase	• Search for information • Compare options	Ø Where can a consumer look for recommendations of a product? Ø Who or what source can a consumer trust more for recommendations of a product? Ø How does a consumer determine a product or brand is preferable to all others?
Purchase	• Order online • Order in person • Pay • Have products delivered • Pick up products	Ø What elements in an actual store or an online store make brands more attractive? Ø What elements in both kinds of stores make a consumer stay longer and buy more?
Post-Purchase	• Use • Evaluate • Return/refund • Keep it/store it • Word of mouth	Ø In what situation should a consumer publicly complain about a brand? Ø What encourages a consumer to fix a used product instead of disposing of it?

Who are consumers?

Who are consumers, you may ask? The answer is simple: Anyone can be a consumer as long as they are involved in any of the behaviors in the process described above. However, different individuals may play different roles in the consumption process. For example, a parent may be the person who actually decides whether or not to buy a product instead of the child who chose the product from among other options because a YouTuber recommended it.

In this scenario, the parent is the buyer, the child is the user, and the YouTuber is the influencer. All of them are considered consumers as they are all engaged in one or more behaviors in the consumption process.

To study consumer behavior, in addition to understanding the behaviors per se, we also want to gain insights into why consumers do what they do as indicated by their demographic background, psychographics, values, upbringing, culture, and people they closely interact with. All of this information can have immense influence on how a consumer behaves in a certain way.

Why is consumer behavior important in fashion and marketing?

Because consumers' decisions related to their appearance are largely influenced by their identity, culture, and social environments, the studies of consumers' behaviors in the fashion/apparel fields need to emphasize specific areas.

For individual consumers, this systematic knowledge of their consumption behaviors helps us define and reinforce preferred behaviors and results (e.g., shop more aware of the environment and its sustainability) and avoid unwanted ones (e.g., overspending on fast fashion). Better knowledge of consumer behavior can help brands and companies identify their market and deal with opportunities and threats to their brands, products, and services.

Lifestyle segmentation marketing is both a tactic and a great example of consumer behavior knowledge application. This approach involves categorizing a target market into distinct groups based on patterns of their behavior in daily life. These patterns may include their activities, interests, and opinions (AIO) or more detailed psychographics pertaining to a certain type of consumption.

For example , professors Dahana, Miwa, and Morisada (2019) found that fashion lifestyles can be defined based on a consumer's self-value (e.g., self-esteem, self-identity), self-image (e.g., social connectedness, brand consciousness), and fashion orientation (e.g., fashion involvement, self-expression, fashion leadership). They also found that segmenting consumers based on their fashion lifestyle can help practitioners identify customers who may shop more frequently, spend more, and stay loyal in the future.

This segmentation approach goes beyond basic demographic characteristics like age, gender, and income and focuses on understanding the deeper psychological and sociocultural aspects that influence consumers' choices and preferences.

RESEARCHING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Disciplines Related to Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior, compared to other fields of studies, is quite young and dynamic, as most of the knowledge about it emerged from disciplines such as economics, psychology, social psychology, sociology, anthropology, and neuroscience (Demirdijan & Senguder, 2004). Each of these disciplines helps us understand the many aspects of consumer behavior from a macro perspective that focuses on understanding the broader social, cultural, and structural influences to a micro perspective that focuses on individual's internal processes, cognition, and emotions.

Consumer behavior can be viewed as the foundation for marketing, and the social sciences disciplines can serve as the foundation for consumer behavior (Deighton, 2007).

Table 2: Macro and Micro Perspectives on Consumers' Behaviors

Perspectives	Disciplines	Key Concepts
Micro	• Experimental Psychology • Clinical Psychology • Developmental Psychology • Micro-Economics	Ø Cognitive processes (e.g., decision making, learning) Ø Motivation and needs: perception and interpretation Ø Self-concept and identity
Macro	• Macro-Economics • History • Sociology • Cultural Anthropology	Ø Culture and sub-culture Ø Social influence Ø Policies and movements

Consumer Behavior Research Examples:

In her book *Primates of Park Avenue,* Dr. Wednesday Martin used her perspective as an anthropologist to describe the relationship between possessions and lifestyles and the structures of the social circles in the Upper East Side of New York City. See the video *Primates of Park Avenue's* Survival Tip #1: Charge or Be Charged

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See also*Primates of Park Avenue: Definition of a Primate*

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Dr. Terry Wu uses "**neuron marketing,**" which looks into the connections between how consumers' perceptions toward stimuli such as a color, music, shape, in the products, ads, or packages and consumers' reactions to products and brands. See Neuromarketing: The new science of consumer decisions.

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Understanding consumer behavior: post-modernism (interpretivism) and modernism

When consumer behavior research was developed, it relied heavily on disciplines that focused on the micro perspectives such as microeconomics, behavioral economics, and psychology. Researchers primarily adopted the modernism approach of inquiry that emphasizes rationality, objectivity, and the search of universal principles that can be generalized to different context. This is also the approach that most physicists and chemists adopted (those rocket sciences!). This approach assumes there is a single truth as the cause of consumption phenomenon that helps practitioners predict the outcomes.

An example of this research inquiry using the modernism approach is as follows: when more than X number of options are presented to consumers, they are less likely to purchase. The possible "cause" in question is the number of options, and the possible outcome is whether the consumer purchases or not.

Researching consumer behavior using the modernism approach often involves quantitative research methods for collecting and analyzing numeric data to understand the relationships of variables and establish models to predict behaviors through surveys, experiments, and numeric meta-data.

In the mid-20th century, a new research inquiry approach emerged: post-modernism (also known as interpretivism) that focuses on understanding and interpreting social phenomena from the perspective of the individuals involved .

Post-modernism emphasizes the subjective meanings, interpretations, and experiences of individuals and seeks to uncover the social and cultural contexts that shape their behaviors and actions. Therefore, the assumption of reality involves multiple truths .

Researching consumer behavior using a post-modernism approach often involves qualitative research methods that focus on gathering rich, in-depth, and contextually nuanced data to explore the complexities of behavior, experiences, and social interactions while using a lens for sociology and anthropology.

Table 3: Positivist Approach versus Interpretivist Approach

Assumptions	**Positivist Approach (modernism)**	**Interpretivist Approach (postmodernism)**
Nature of reality	• Objective, tangible • Single	Ø Socially constructed Ø Multiple
Goal	• Prediction	Ø Understanding
Knowledge generated	• Time free • Context-independent	Ø Time-bound Ø Contest dependent
View of causality	• Existence of real causes	Ø Multiple, simultaneous shaping events
Research relationship	• Separation between researcher and subject	Ø Interactive, cooperative with researcher being part of phenomenon under study

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Dahana, W. D., Miwa, Y., & Morisada, M. (2019). Linking lifestyle to customer lifetime value: An exploratory study in an online fashion retail market. Journal of Business Research, 99, 319–331.

Deighton, J. (2007). From the Editor: The Territory of Consumer Research : Journal of Consumer Research, 34(3), 279–282.

Demirdijan, Z. S., & Senguder, T. (2004). Perspective in Consumer Behavior: Paradigm Shift in Prospect. The Journal of American Academy of Business, 4, 348–353.

TOPIC 2. CONSUMER DECISION MAKING AT A GLANCE

Learning Objectives

In this section, we will learn about individual consumer decision making and how marketers can design strategies to influence the consumer decision making process. This section also introduces trends that influence different stages of the consumer decision making process.

Upon completing this section, students should:

1. Identify and explain each stage in the consumer decision making process.
2. Identify factors that influence how much search consumers may engage in before making purchase decisions.
3. Summarize the ways consumers evaluate competing options.
4. Discuss leading trends marketers use to effect heuristics in the consumer decision making process.
5. Propose different ways marketers and consumers can address sustainable disposal options.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

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- Cause-related marketing: A collaborative and mutually beneficial relationship between a business and a non-profit organization that provides the business with greater access to consumer markets (in pursuit of sales, growth, and profit) and the non-profit with more exposure and awareness of its cause.
- Cognitive dissonance: A type of cognitive inconsistency, this term describes the discomfort consumers may feel when their beliefs, values, attitudes, or perceptions are inconsistent or contradictory to their original belief or understanding. Consumers with cognitive dissonance related to a purchasing decision will often seek to resolve this internal turmoil they are experiencing by returning the product or finding a way to justify it and minimizing their sense of buyer's remorse.
- Conscientious consumerism: A term used to describe consumers who act with a heightened sense of awareness, care, and sensitivity in their purchasing decisions. This form of consumerism centres the principles of sustainability and may either present as performative or values-based decision making.
- Consumer hyperchoice: A term that describes a purchasing situation in which a consumer is faced with an excess of choice that makes decision making difficult or nearly impossible.
- Detachment: The mental and emotional separation a consumer undergoes with an unwanted or no longed needed product; this is considered the "invisible" part of divestment.
- Disposable products: These are products that are designed for single use, which means they get discarded ("disposed of") immediately after use. Disposable products can have severely negative consequences on the environment if sustainability isn't factored into disposal options.
- Disposal: The process of discarding (getting rid of) something we no longer need or want. The act of throwing something away.
- Disposition: The physical separation a consumer undergoes with an unwanted or no longed needed product; this is considered the "visible" part of divestment.
- Divestment: This term refers to the final stage of consumption after a product has been used and is no longer wanted or needed by the consumer. Divestment is comprised of disposition and detachment.
- Ethnocentric consumer: These consumers perceive their own culture or country's goods as being superior to others'.
- Ethnocentrism: Consumers who select brands because they represent their own culture and country of origin are making decisions based on ethnocentrism. Consumers who are quick to

generalize and judge brands based on ethnocentrism are engaging their heuristics.

- Evaluation of alternatives: The third stage of the Consumer Decision Making Process, the evaluation of alternatives takes place when a consumer establishes criteria to evaluate the most viable purchasing option.
- Evoke set: A small set of “go-to” brands that consumers will consider as they evaluate the alternatives available to them before making a purchasing decision.
- Fast fashion: A term that describes the quick process of events that take place when fashion items go from the “catwalk” to retail outlets that mainly market to, and serve, mainstream consumers. Fast fashion has negative consequences on disposal and is an unsustainable process that leads to a high volume of waste as well as concerns about the ethical practices in clothing production.
- Full/extended decision making process: Consumer purchases made when a (new) need is identified and a consumer engages in a more rigorous evaluation, research, and alternative assessment process before satisfying the unmet need.
- Green marketing: The design, development, and promotion of products that serve to minimize negative and harmful effects on the environment. Green marketing is most visibly evident through packaging design, labeling, and messaging (e.g. “green dish soap”).
- Greenwashing: A term used to describe an act of hypocrisy whereby a company proclaims to engage in “green” business (marketing) practices, but is actually engaging in harmful and devastating impacts on the environment. Those impacts may be hidden, disguised, or purposely misrepresented to consumers (and broader group of stakeholders) so the company can win favour with conscientious consumers.
- Heuristics: Also known as “mental shortcuts” or “rules of thumb,” heuristics help consumers by simplifying the decision-making process.
- Inept set: The brands a consumer would not pay any attention to during the evaluation of alternatives process.
- Inert set: The brands a consumer is aware of but indifferent to, when evaluating alternatives in the consumer decision making process. The consumer may deem these brands irrelevant and will therefore exclude them from any extensive evaluation or consideration.
- Inertia: Purchasing decisions made out of habit.
- Information search: The second stage of the Consumer Decision Making Process, information search takes place when a consumer seeks relative information that will help them identify and evaluate alternatives before deciding on the final purchase decision.
- Lateral cycling: A feature of product disposal that involves selling, donating, or giving away unwanted items in an effort to keep them from ending up as waste in landfills. Lateral cycling is a more sustainable act of disposal than just throwing something away.
- Materialism: The prioritization of possessions (material possessions), money, and the consumer purchases above and beyond relationships, spirituality, and personal well-being.

- Need recognition: The first stage of the Consumer Decision Making Process, need recognition takes place when a consumer identifies an unmet need.
- Pinkwashing: Similar in spirit to "greenwashing," this term is used to describe an act of hypocrisy whereby a company aligns itself with a breast cancer fundraising endeavour (e.g. pink ribbon campaign) all the while producing products that are associated with the very causes of (breast) cancer itself. Brands that engage in pinkwashing may disguise or purposely misrepresent the (dangerous) ingredients in their products or the (unsafe and hazardous) working conditions used to bring the products to market in order to win favour with consumers who idealize the significance of the pink ribbon symbol.
- Planned obsolescence: A deliberate act marketers and businesses take in designing, producing, and marketing products that become obsolete quickly, therefore triggering consumers to buy the "next version" as a replacement. Planned obsolescence has negative consequences on disposal and the environment when products aren't designed with sustainable disposal in mind. It is also an unsustainable practice that prioritizes profit over consumer and environmental well-being.
- Recycling: Recycling involves the repurposing and transformation of discarded/disposed products (that would otherwise be thrown away) into something that has a different purpose. Recycling turns waste into reusable materials.
- Simple/routine decision making process: Consumer purchases made when a need is identified and a habitual ("routine") purchase is made to satisfy that need.
- Social impact: One of the dimensions of a sustainable business: an examination of a business's practices that relate to labour conditions as well as the entirety of its operations across that the supply chain to ensure those practices reflect social responsibility and ethical behaviour.
- Upcycling: A process of product disposal that involves the repurposing of unwanted items that give them a "second life". Upcycling is a transformative process that takes an unwanted item and transforms it into a more functional or even attractive item than it once was. It is a more sustainable act of disposal than just throwing something away.

CONSUMER DECISION MAKING PROCESS

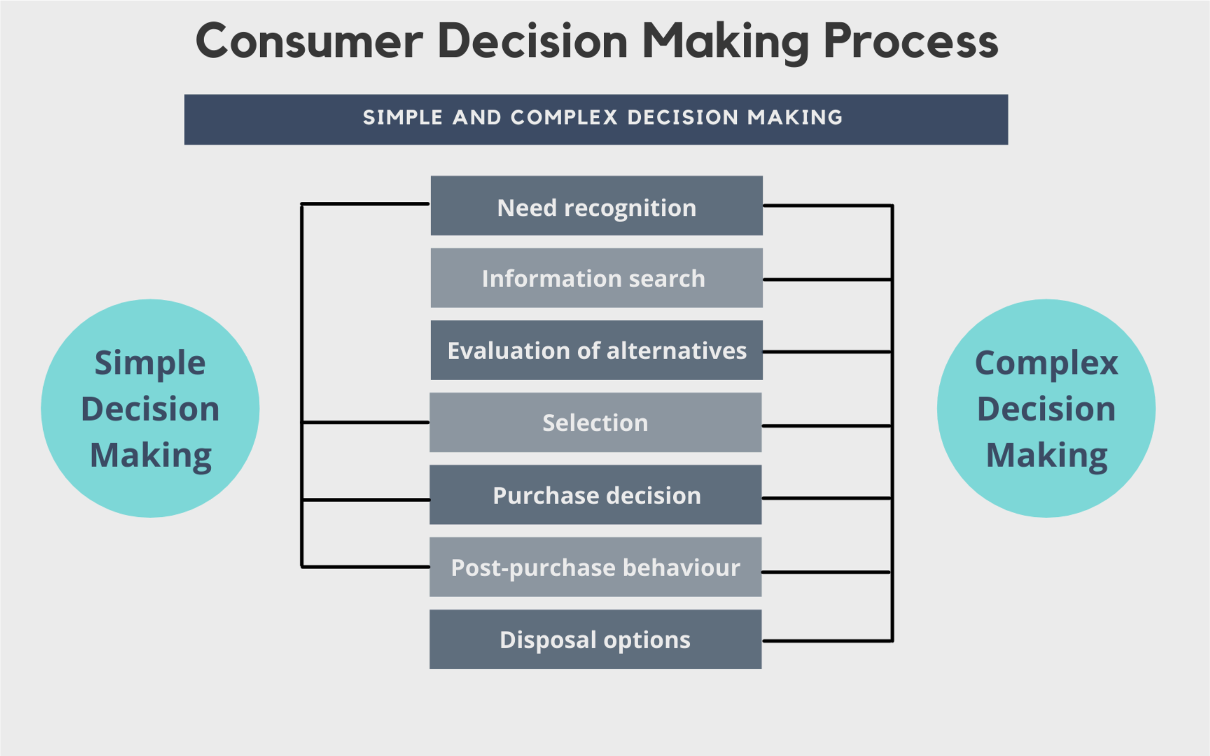
An organization that wants to be successful must consider buyer behavior when developing the marketing mix. Buyer behavior is the actions people take with regard to buying and using products. Marketers must understand buyer behavior, such as how raising or lowering a price will affect the buyer's perception of the product and therefore create a fluctuation in sales, or how a specific review on social media can create an entirely new direction for the marketing mix based on the comments (buyer behavior/input) of the target market.

The Consumer Decision Making Process

Once the process is started, a potential buyer can withdraw at any stage of making the actual purchase. The tendency for a person to go through all six stages is likely only in certain buying situations—a first time purchase of a product, for instance, or when buying high priced, long-lasting, infrequently purchased articles. This is referred to as **complex decision making**.

For many products, the purchasing behavior is a routine affair in which the aroused need is satisfied in a habitual manner by repurchasing the same brand. That is, past reinforcement in learning experiences leads directly to buying, and thus the second and third stages are bypassed. This is called **simple decision making**.

However, if something changes appreciably (price, product, availability, services), the buyer may re-enter the full decision process and consider alternative brands. Whether complex or simple, the first step is need identification (Assael, 1987).


Consumer Decision Making Process
SIMPLE AND COMPLEX DECISION MAKING
Simple Decision Making
Need recognition
Information search
Evaluation of alternatives
Selection
Purchase decision
Post-purchase behaviour
Disposal options
Complex Decision Making

Both simple (routine) and complex decision making begins with need recognition. The simple route jumps straight to select and purchase; whereas the complex process involves more thorough search and evaluation activities before a selection is made.

When Inertia Takes Over

When consumers make purchasing decisions out of habit, we call this **inertia**. This habitual form of purchasing involves little complex decision making once the consider has recognized a need (i.e., “I am out of printer paper”). These types of purchases require little effort on the consumer’s side and brands are easily substituted for others if the purchasing experience can be made to be more convenient. In contrast, brand loyalty occurs when consumers go out of their way to repeatedly purchase a brand that they favour above all others. Consumers are unlikely to substitute the brand for another one and usually form a bond or connection with the brand over time.

Need Recognition

Whether we act to resolve a particular problem depends upon two factors: (1) the magnitude of the discrepancy between what we have and what we need, and (2) the importance of the problem. A consumer may desire a new Cadillac and own a five-year-old Chevrolet. The discrepancy may be fairly large but relatively unimportant compared to the other problems they face. Conversely, an individual may own a car that is two years old and running very well. Yet, for various reasons, they may consider it extremely important to purchase a car this year. People must resolve these types of conflicts before they can proceed. Otherwise, the buying process for a given product stops at this point, probably in frustration.

Once the problem is recognized it must be defined in such a way that the consumer can actually initiate the action that will bring about a relevant problem solution. Note that, in many cases, problem recognition and problem definition occur simultaneously, such as a consumer running out of toothpaste. Consider the more complicated problem involved with status and image–how we want others to see us. For example, you may know that you are not satisfied with your appearance, but you may not be able to define it any more precisely than that. Consumers will not know where to begin solving their problem until the problem is adequately defined.

Marketers can become involved in the **need recognition** stage in three ways. First they need to know what problems consumers are facing in order to develop a marketing mix to help solve these problems. This requires that they measure problem recognition. Second, on occasion, marketers want to activate problem recognition. Public service announcements espousing the dangers of cigarette smoking is an example. Weekend and night shop hours are a response of retailers to the consumer problem of limited weekday shopping opportunities. This problem has become particularly important to families with two working adults. Finally, marketers can also shape the definition of the need or problem. If a consumer needs a new coat, do they define the problem as a need for inexpensive covering, a way to stay warm on the coldest days, a garment that will last several years, warm cover that will not attract odd looks from their peers, or an article of clothing that will express their personal sense of style? A salesperson or an ad may shape their answers

Information Search

After a need is recognized, the prospective consumer may seek information to help identify and evaluate alternative products, services, and outlets that will meet that need. Such information can come from family, friends, personal observation, or other sources, such as Consumer Reports, salespeople, or mass media. The promotional component of the marketers offering is aimed at providing information to assist the consumer in their problem solving process. In some cases, the consumer already has the needed information based on past purchasing and consumption experience. Bad experiences and lack of satisfaction can destroy repeat purchases. The consumer with a need for tires may look for information in the local newspaper or ask friends for recommendation. If they have bought tires before and was satisfied, they may go to the same dealer and buy the same brand.

Information search can also identify new needs. As a tire shopper looks for information, they may decide that the tires are not the real problem, that the need is for a new car. At this point, the perceived need may change triggering a new informational search. Information search involves mental as well as the physical activities that consumers must perform in order to make decisions and accomplish desired goals in the marketplace. It takes time, energy, money, and can often involve foregoing more desirable activities. The benefits of information search, however, can outweigh the costs. For example, engaging in a thorough information search may save money, improve quality of selection, or reduce risks. The Internet is a valuable information source.

Evaluation of Alternatives

After information is secured and processed, alternative products, services, and outlets are identified as viable options. The consumer **evaluates these alternatives**, and, if financially and psychologically able, makes a choice. The criteria used in evaluation varies from consumer to consumer just as the needs and information sources vary. One consumer may consider price most important while another puts more weight (importance) upon quality or convenience.

Using the 'Rule of Thumb'

Consumers don't have the time or desire to ponder endlessly about every purchase! Fortunately for us, **heuristics,** also described as shortcuts or mental "rules of thumb", help us make decisions quickly and painlessly. Heuristics are especially important to draw on when we are faced with choosing among products in a category where we don't see huge differences or if the outcome isn't 'do or die'.

Heuristics are helpful sets of rules that simplify the decision-making process by making it quick and easy for consumers.

Common Heuristics in Consumer Decision Making

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- Save the most money: Many people follow a rule like, "I'll buy the lowest-priced choice so that I spend the least money right now." Using this *heuristic* means you don't need to look beyond the price tag to make a decision. Wal-Mart built a retailing empire by pleasing consumers who follow this rule.
- You get what you pay for: Some consumers might use the opposite *heuristic* of saving the most money and instead follow a rule such as: "I'll buy the more expensive product because higher price means better quality." These consumers are influenced by advertisements alluding to exclusivity, quality, and uncompromising performance.
- Stich to the tried and true: Brand loyalty also simplifies the decision-making process because we buy the brand that we've always bought before. therefore, we don't need to spend more time and effort on the decision. Advertising plays a critical role in creating brand loyalty.
  In a study of the market leaders in thirty product categories, 27 of the brands that were #1 in 1930 were still at the top over 50 years later (Stevesnson, 1988)! A well known brand name is a powerful *heuristic*.
- National pride: Consumers who select brands because they represent their own culture and country of origin are making decision based on *ethnocentrism*. *Ethnocentric consumers* are said to perceive their own culture or country's goods as being superior to others'. Ethnocentrism can behave as both a stereotype and a type of *heuristic* for consumers who are quick to generalize and judge brands based on their country of origin.
- Visual cues: Consumers may also rely on visual cues represented in product and packaging design. Visual cues may include the colour of the brand or product or deeper beliefs that they have developed about the brand. For example, if brands claim to support sustainability and climate activism, consumers want to believe these to be true. Visual cues such as green design and neutral-coloured packaging that appears to be made of recycled materials play into consumers' *heuristics*.

The search for alternatives and the methods used in the search are influenced by such factors as: (a) time and money costs; (b) how much information the consumer already has; (c) the amount of the perceived risk if a wrong selection is made; and (d) the consumer's predisposition toward particular choices as influenced by the attitude of the individual toward choice behaviour. That is, there are individuals who find the selection process to be difficult and disturbing. For these people there is a tendency to keep the number of alternatives to a minimum, even if they have not gone through an extensive information search to find that their alternatives appear to be the very best. On the other hand, there are individuals who feel it necessary to collect a long list of alternatives. This tendency can appreciably slow down the decision-making function.

Consumer Evaluations Made Easier

The evaluation of alternatives often involves consumers drawing on their evoke, inept, and insert sets to help them in the decision making process.

Evoke Set

The brands and products that consumers compare—their **evoked set** —represent the alternatives being considered by consumers during the problem-solving process. Sometimes known as a "consideration" set, the evoked set tends to be small relative to the total number of options available. When a consumer commits significant time to the comparative process and reviews price, warranties, terms and condition of sale and other features it is said that they are involved in extended problem solving. Unlike routine problem solving, extended or extensive problem solving comprises external research and the evaluation of alternatives. Whereas, routine problem solving is low-involvement, inexpensive, and has limited risk if purchased, extended problem solving justifies the additional effort with a high-priced or scarce product, service, or benefit (e.g., the purchase of a car). Likewise, consumers use extensive problem solving for infrequently purchased, expensive, high-risk, or new goods or services.

Inept Set

As opposed to the evoked set, a consumer's **inept set** represent those brands that they would not given any consideration too. For a consumer who is shopping around for an electric vehicle, for example, they would not even remotely consider gas-guzzling vehicles like large SUVs.

Inert Set

The **inert set** represents those brands or products a consumer is aware of, but is indifferent to and doesn't consider them either desirable or relevant enough to be among the evoke set. Marketers have an opportunity here to position their brands appropriately so consumers move these items from their insert to evoke set when evaluation alternatives.

Selection

The selection of an alternative, in many cases, will require additional evaluation. For example, a consumer may select a favorite brand and go to a convenient outlet to make a purchase. Upon arrival at the dealer, the consumer finds that the desired brand is out-of-stock. At this point, additional evaluation is needed to decide whether to wait until the product comes in, accept a substitute, or go to another outlet. The selection and evaluation phases of consumer problem solving are closely related and often run sequentially, with outlet selection influencing product evaluation, or product selection influencing outlet evaluation.

While many consumers would agree that choice is a good thing, there is such a thing as “too much choice” that inhibits the consumer decision making process. **Consumer hyperchoice** is a term used to describe purchasing situations that involve an excess of choice thus making selection for difficult for consumers. Dr. Sheena Iyengar studies consumer choice and collects data that supports the concept of consumer hyperchoice. In one of her studies, she put out jars of jam in a grocery store for shoppers to sample, with the intention to influence purchases. Dr. Iyengar discovered that when a fewer number of jam samples were provided to shoppers, more purchases were made. But when a large number of jam samples were set out, fewer purchases were made (Green, 2010). As it turns out, “more is less” when it comes to the selection process.

The Purchase Decision

After much searching and evaluating, or perhaps very little, consumers at some point have to decide whether they are going to buy.

Anything marketers can do to simplify purchasing will be attractive to buyers. This may include minimal clicks to online checkout; short wait times in line; and simplified payment options. When it comes to advertising marketers could also suggest the best size for a particular use, or the right wine to drink with a particular food. Sometimes several decision situations can be combined and marketed as one package. For example, travel agents often package travel tours with flight and hotel reservations.

To do a better marketing job at this stage of the buying process, a seller needs to know answers to many questions about consumers’ shopping behaviour. For instance, how much effort is the consumer willing to spend in shopping for the product? What factors influence when the consumer will actually purchase? Are there any conditions that would prohibit or delay purchase? Providing basic product, price, and location information through labels, advertising, personal selling, and public relations is an obvious starting point. Product sampling, coupons, and rebates may also provide an extra incentive to buy.

Actually determining how a consumer goes through the decision-making process is a difficult research task.

Post-Purchase Behaviour

All the behaviour determinants and the steps of the buying process up to this point are operative before or during the time a purchase is made. However, a consumer's feelings and evaluations after the sale are also significant to a marketer, because they can influence repeat sales and also influence what the customer tells others about the product or brand.

Keeping the customer happy is what marketing is all about. Nevertheless, consumers typically experience some post-purchase anxiety after all but the most routine and inexpensive purchases. This anxiety reflects a phenomenon called **cognitive dissonance**. According to this theory, people strive for consistency among their cognitions (knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, values). When there are inconsistencies, dissonance exists, which people will try to eliminate. In some cases, the consumer makes the decision to buy a particular brand already aware of dissonant elements. In other instances, dissonance is aroused by disturbing information that is received after the purchase. The marketer may take specific steps to reduce post-purchase dissonance. Advertising that stresses the many positive attributes or confirms the popularity of the product can be helpful. Providing personal reinforcement has proven effective with big-ticket items such as automobiles and major appliances. Salespeople in these areas may send cards or may even make personal calls in order to reassure customers about their purchase.

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PRODUCT DISPOSAL AND DISPOSAL OPTIONS

The last stage in the Consumer Decision Making Process is **disposal**. What options do consumers have at the end of a product's lifecycle? What about when we tire, get bored, or outgrow something we own? Sustainable marketing requires a deliberate attempt to minimize a product's end-of-life impact on the environment around us. That means consumers need a range of options when they dispose of products they no longer need or want.

The Need for Responsible & Sustainable Disposal Options

There was a time when neither manufacturers nor consumers thought much about how products got disposed of, so long as people bought them. But that's changed. How products are being disposed of is becoming extremely important to consumers and society in general. Computers and batteries, which leech chemicals into landfills, are a huge problem. Consumers don't want to degrade the environment if they don't have to, and companies are becoming more aware of this fact.

Take for example Crystal Light, a water-based beverage that's sold in grocery stores. You can buy it in a bottle. However, many people buy a concentrated form of it, put it in reusable pitchers or bottles, and add water. That way, they don't have to buy and dispose of plastic bottle after plastic bottle, damaging the environment in the process. Windex has done something similar with its window cleaner. Instead of buying new bottles of it all the time, you can purchase a concentrate and add water. You have probably noticed that most grocery stores now sell cloth bags consumers can reuse instead of continually using and discarding of new plastic or paper bags.

Other companies are less concerned about conservation than they are about planned obsolescence. **Planned obsolescence** is a deliberate effort by companies to make their products obsolete, or unusable, after a period of time. The goal is to improve a company's sales by reducing the amount of time between the repeat purchases consumers make of products. When a software developer introduces a new version of product, it is usually designed to be incompatible with older versions of it. For example, not all the formatting features are the same in Microsoft Word 2007 and 2010. Sometimes documents do not translate properly when opened in the newer version. Consequently, you will be more inclined to upgrade to the new version so you can open all Word documents you receive.

Products that are **disposable** are another way in which firms have managed to reduce the amount of time between purchases. Disposable lighters are an example. Do you know anyone today that owns a nondisposable lighter? Believe it or not, prior to the 1960s, scarcely anyone could have imagined using a cheap disposable lighter. There are many more disposable products today than there were in years past—including everything from bottled water and individually wrapped snacks to single-use eye drops and cell phones.

End-of-life disposal options may either extend the life of a product or delay (and maybe even completely omit) its final resting place in a landfill. Marketing's responsibility doesn't end at the point of purchase: designing sustainability for the end of the product's lifecycle should be factored in to the product design and marketing plan from the very beginning. Providing an easy and accessible way for consumers to participate in sustainable end-of-life disposal options can also be a lucrative option for marketers (e.g., Patagonia).

Disposition & Divestment Rituals

Divestment is the process users experience when separating from a product. Divestment represents the combination of physical separation and mental and emotional separation processes that users go through when ending the use cycle of a product (Gregson, Metcalfe, & Crewe 2007; Glover, 2012). Divestment is the combination of **disposition** (i.e., physical separation) and **detachment** (i.e., mental and emotional separation of the product).

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=120#h5p-16

- Divestment: Overarching term referring to the final phase of the consumption cycle after the purchase and the use phases.
- Disposition: Physical separation of the product, the visible part of divestment.
- Detachment: Mental and emotional separation of the product, the invisible part of divestment.

Often when we are trying to "get rid" of things we move them around in our house. Some things, like clothing we've outgrown or no long want get stacked in a bedroom closet. Toys that our children no longer want get piled in the basement. Furniture and household items we have replaced with newer items occupy their own distinct territory in the garage. Our physical separation, or disposition, of possessions rarely take a direct route and many people perform their own ritual of collecting and storing items for a while—at least until less or no emotional detachment is holding us back from parting ways.

Recycling, Lateral Cycling, & Upcycling

Most consumers are familiar with **recycling**—a process of turning waste into another form of new and reusable materials, but many might be surprised to know that recycled goods can sometimes command a premium price. When Canadian fashion retailer Aritzia came out with its signature down jacket the *Super Puff*, the brand also introduced consumers to its *Super (Re) Puff*, a version of the same jacket made with regenerated nylon from pre- and post consumer waste ("Aritzia to Launch…," 2020). Living up to its brand tagline, "Everyday Luxury," the *Super (Re) Puff* is priced about $50 more than it's less sustainably produced counterpart.

Lateral cycling occurs when we sell, donate, or give away products to others who may use the products for the same intended purpose or for another purpose entirely. Examples of lateral cycling include disposing our products through garage sales; second-hand stores; online buy and sell communities such as Facebook Marketplace, Craigslist, eBay, Kijiji, etc. Lateral cycling can also occur when consumers exchange product ownership and isn't exclusive to selling used products for profit.

In recent years the term **upcycling** has been used to describe when products get repurposed—almost like having a new or "second life." The online community and website, "Upcycle That," defines upcycling as "taking something that's considered waste and re-purposing it. The upcycled item often becomes more functional or beautiful than what it previously was" (About Upcycling, n.d.). Thanks to the upcycling process, some items even increase their value and fetch a higher price in the market.

In 2019, Patagonia launched a new product line called, "ReCrafted," which upcycles waste fabric into unique and one-of-a kind garments (Segran, 2021). According to Alex Kremer, Patagonia's Director of Worn Wear, the company has created a new revenue stream by upcycling products and selling the new pieces at a premium — something all fashion brands could be doing.

Fast Fashion's Impact on Disposal

In recent years there has been much criticism of both the business model and practices of those engaged in **fast fashion**. From shopping malls, to fashion magazines, to catalogs, to online advertisements, consumers are exposed to countless opportunities to spend money on fashionable apparel that exists within a short time span (Yang et al., 2017). The fast fashion consumer buying trend encourages rampant consumerism because designs are usually based on the most recent fashion trends presented in Fashion

Week magazine twice a year (Yang et al., 2017; Hines & Bruce, 2007; Muran, 2007). Because the supply chain—from catwalk to retailer—is well optimized in particular for the design and manufacturing process of clothing collections, consumers are able to purchase the latest trends at a fraction of the cost of original design clothing (Yang et al., 2017; Hines, 2010; Pfeiffer, 2007).

The downside, of course, is that the proliferation of fast fashion combined with lower consumer prices means both purchasing and disposing are happening at a faster pace as well (Yang et al., 2017). Therefore, as Yang et al., discuss, fast fashion has also become associated with "disposable fashion" (Hines, 2007). Not only is fast fashion "leading the way in actual disposable clothing," Yang et al. write, "it is particularly worrisome for sustainable development, because it creates a demand for cheap clothing and then, ultimately produces and constantly churns out a massive amount of textile waste, accelerating carbon emissions and global warming" ("Where does…clothing go," 2014).

The evolution of fashion fashion has been captured in the interactive student feature below. Consider how fast fashion has evolved and the factors that have influenced in based on where you live or study.

Student Feature: Fast Fashion Timeline

Explore some of the most significant events in history that have shaped the "fast fashion" culture prevalent in today's society. Created by KPU students Prabhdeep Kaur, Leo Ng, Carla Flores, and Katie Stutheit. *Click on the arrows to the right to move along the timeline.*

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=120#oembed-1

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TRENDS IMPACTING INDIVIDUAL CONSUMER DECISION MAKING

The "evaluation of alternatives stage" in the Individual Decision Making Process is worthy of a book on its own! There are many different techniques marketers will employ to get the attention of consumers and be top-of-mind when they are ready to make a purchase. For many years now, consumer attitudes and behaviours around sustainability and conscientious consumerism have shifted and become a key determinant in individual consumer decision making. Marketers have responded by creating strategies, campaigns, and promotions that win favour with consumers and put them ahead of the competition. Naturally, the rush to the finish line often involves manipulation, cutting corners, and deceiving consumers: often the hypocrisy goes unnoticed and its impact overlooked.

Green Marketing

In the early 21st century, we are witnessing a profound shift in priorities as people clamor for products and services that are good for their bodies, good for their community, and good for the Earth. Some analysts call this new value **conscientious consumerism**. They estimate the U.S. market for body-friendly and earth-friendly products at more than $200 billion.[1]

Just how widespread is conscientious consumerism? In a 2007 survey, eight in 10 consumers said they believe it's important to buy green products and that they'll pay more to do so. Corporate responsibility is now one of the primary attributes shoppers look for when they decide among competing brands. Consumer research strongly suggests that this awareness often starts with personal health concerns and then radiates outward to embrace the community and the environment. Predictably, advertisers have been quick to jump on the green bandwagon. **Green marketing**, which emphasizes how products and services are environmentally responsible, is red hot.

Social Impact

Social impact refers to the performance of a sustainable business relative to societies and social justice.

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Internally, the social impact of a business refers to practices related to employees and employment within the business; externally, social impact practices include participating in Fair Trade practices.

In addition to employment practices, social impact refers to respect of others. This entails the respect of individuals and other businesses encountered locally and around the world. A sustainable business will make reasonable efforts to ensure its *policies, practices, products, advertising, logo or mascot, and other aspects of the business are not offensive or disrespectful to clients in the global market*.

Tips to Increase Your Social Impact

Have you considered where your coffee, chocolate, clothing, or other products come from and the conditions under which they were produced? Social impact is one of the three pillars of a sustainable business, but it can be difficult to define and even more difficult to track and measure.

A sustainable business should consider the social impact of its business operations on employees, those employed throughout the supply chain, and on the community. So how can a business begin to maximize its social impact?

Here are some practices that will help create positive social impact:

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=123#h5p-17

- **UN Global Compact**: Review the 10 principles of the United Nations Global Compact and abide by them, whether or not the business becomes a signatory.
- **Buy Fair Trade**: Seek out opportunities to purchase Fair Trade products for your business. Fair Trade products ensure that those who produced the product in developing countries were paid a fair wage under humane working conditions. You can purchase Fair Trade clothing, handicrafts, coffee, cocoa, sugar, tea, bananas, honey, cotton, wine, fresh fruit, flowers, and other products.
- **Company Policies and Practices**: Consider the social impact of your company's policies and practices on employees (such as healthcare coverage, educational opportunities, and work-life balance).
- **Philanthropy**: Evaluate the impact of your corporate giving programs. Find opportunities that are strategically related to your core business, and focus your philanthropy in those areas, benefiting both the community and the business.
- **Supply Chain**: Understand the conditions under which the products and supplies you purchase were produced; work with suppliers to achieve transparency throughout the supply chain; check the web sites of any of the numerous watchdog organizations (e.g. CorpWatch, Sweatshop Watch, International Labour Rights Forum) to find world regions, specific companies, and industries known for human rights abuses that could be occurring within your supply chain.
- **Labour**: Make sure your business follows policies and practices that are fair to its labour force. A good place to start is SA8000 and the International Labour Standards. Review and understand the standards, whether or not your business seeks certification. Support freedom of association,

collective bargaining, and nondiscrimination in your own place of business as well as with suppliers. In purchasing, avoid products that were produced using forced and child labour. Look for certifications from Fair Trade Federation, Fair Labour Association, Social Accountability International, RugMark, Verite, Worker Rights Consortium, or others that have independently evaluated labour conditions.
- **Social Responsibility**: Check out the 2010 release of the ISO 26000 standards on social responsibility for companies.

There are many examples of brands and corporations invested in maximizing their social impact. These can be found in several different product categories, from ice cream (Ben & Jerry's) to footwear (Adidas) to furniture (Herman Miller; Ikea). Some argue that the reason many brands are engaging in social impact initiatives is to better align with consumers — and not just any consumers, but Generation Z more specifically (RippleMatch Team, 2020).

In 2018, McKinsey & Company collaborated with Box 1824, a research agency, to learn more about the "true digital natives" born between 1995 and 2010. The study revealed four core Gen Z behaviours: that they value expression over brand labels; that they will mobilize for a variety of different causes; that they believe in the power of dialogue to solve important problems; and, that they relate to institutions in an analytic and pragmatic way (Francis & Hoefel, 2018).

These core behaviours also have a direct impact on how Gen Z approaches consumption and their relationships with brands; the most notable finding in the study was that Gen Z view, "consumption as a matter of ethical concern" (Francis & Hoefel, 2018).

TOMS Shoes' Social Impact Commitment

TOMS Shoes is an example of a company making a commitment to maximize its social impact. In 2006, Blake Mycoskie founded TOMS Shoes with the singular mission of improving the lives of children by providing shoes to those in need. Shoes are produced in Argentina and China following fair labour practices while creating minimal environmental impact. Factories are monitored by TOMS and third-party independent auditors. TOMS Shoes are sold online and in retail locations around the world with the promise that for each pair purchased, TOMS will donate a second pair to a child in need in Argentina, South Africa, and other locations around the world. The public is invited to participate in "shoe drops" around the world and to experience firsthand the social contribution of TOMS Shoes.

Cause-Related Marketing

Cause-related marketing is one of the fastest-growing types of sponsorships. It occurs when a company supports a nonprofit organization in some way. For example, M&M's sponsors the Special Olympics and American Airlines raises money for breast cancer research with an annual celebrity golf and tennis tournament. The airline also donates frequent flier miles to the cause. Yoplait Yogurt donates money for breast cancer research for every pink lid that is submitted. Cause-related marketing can have a positive PR impact by strengthening the affinity people have for a company that does it.

Different Flavors of Cause-Related Marketing

There are many examples of high-profile cause-related marketing campaigns where some of our most beloved consumer products have teamed up with non-profits in order to achieve mutually beneficial goals. Some of these might even be familiar to you:

- Pepsi's support for a campaign called "Movember" that raises awareness about prostate cancer.
- Starbucks' involvement with REDto raise money for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS.
- Reebok and Avon's long association with Susan G. Komen Foundation's Walk to End Breast Cancer.
- Walmart and its support for the Childrens Miracle Network.

In 2016, Ben & Jerry's (the famous ice cream makers) launched a new flavour of ice cream that was part of a cause marketing campaign of a different kind: their "Empower Mint" ice cream was introduced in connection to a political and social justice campaign of their own making called, "Democracy is in your Hands" (Carmicheal, 2020). The purpose of the campaign was to raise awareness about, voter suppression laws.

> "Voter-suppression laws are targeting Black, Brown, and low-income voters, the gutting of hte Voting Rights Act (VRA) has allowed many states to move forward wtih plans to make it harder for people to vote, and money from wealthy donors is corrupting the system" ("Democracy…," n.d.).

In addition to raising awareness about voter suppression, Ben & Jerry include calls-to-action on the website to register voters and join their fight for democracy and voter rights in America.

Greenwashing

The advertising industry has the potential to radically change people's attitudes and (more importantly) their behaviours as we face the real consequences of environmental contamination. Unfortunately, there's also the very real potential that it will "poison the well" as it jumps onto the bandwagon a bit *too* energetically. It's almost impossible to find an ad for virtually any kind of product, service, or company that doesn't tout its environmental credentials, whether the focus of the ad is a detergent, a garment, a commercial airplane, or even an oil company.

Greenwashing is the act of creating an environmental spin on products or activities without genuine business-wide commitment to sustainability. Sustainability is a company-wide goal that permeates through every task, role, department, division, and activity of the company. Unwitting businesses may engage in greenwashing for a variety of reasons, such as a lack of understanding of sustainability. Other reasons may include attempts to expand market share, attract and manage employees, attract investors, derail critics, circumvent regulatory issues, and improve image. However, greenwashing may damage an otherwise credible business's image or reputation.

As a result, complaints about greenwashing, or misleading consumers about a product's environmental benefits, are skyrocketing. One egregious example is an ad for a gas-guzzling Japanese sport utility vehicle that bills the car as having been "conceived and developed in the homeland of the Kyoto accords," the international emissions-reduction agreement.[2]

To prevent a *greenwash* backlash, it's imperative for advertisers to act responsibly. There's nothing wrong with trumpeting the environmental value of your product— *if* the claims are accurate and specific. Or you can suggest alternative methods to use your product that will minimize its negative impact— for example, Procter & Gamble runs an ad campaign in the United Kingdom that urges consumers of its laundry detergents to wash their clothing at lower temperatures ([3], 2008; Pfanner, 2008).

The Federal Trade Commission provides guidelines to evaluate green advertising claims; it suggests that "if a label says 'recycled,' check how much of the product or package is recycled. The fact is that unless the product or package contains 100 percent recycled materials, the label must tell you how much is recycled" ("Sorting Out…," 1999).

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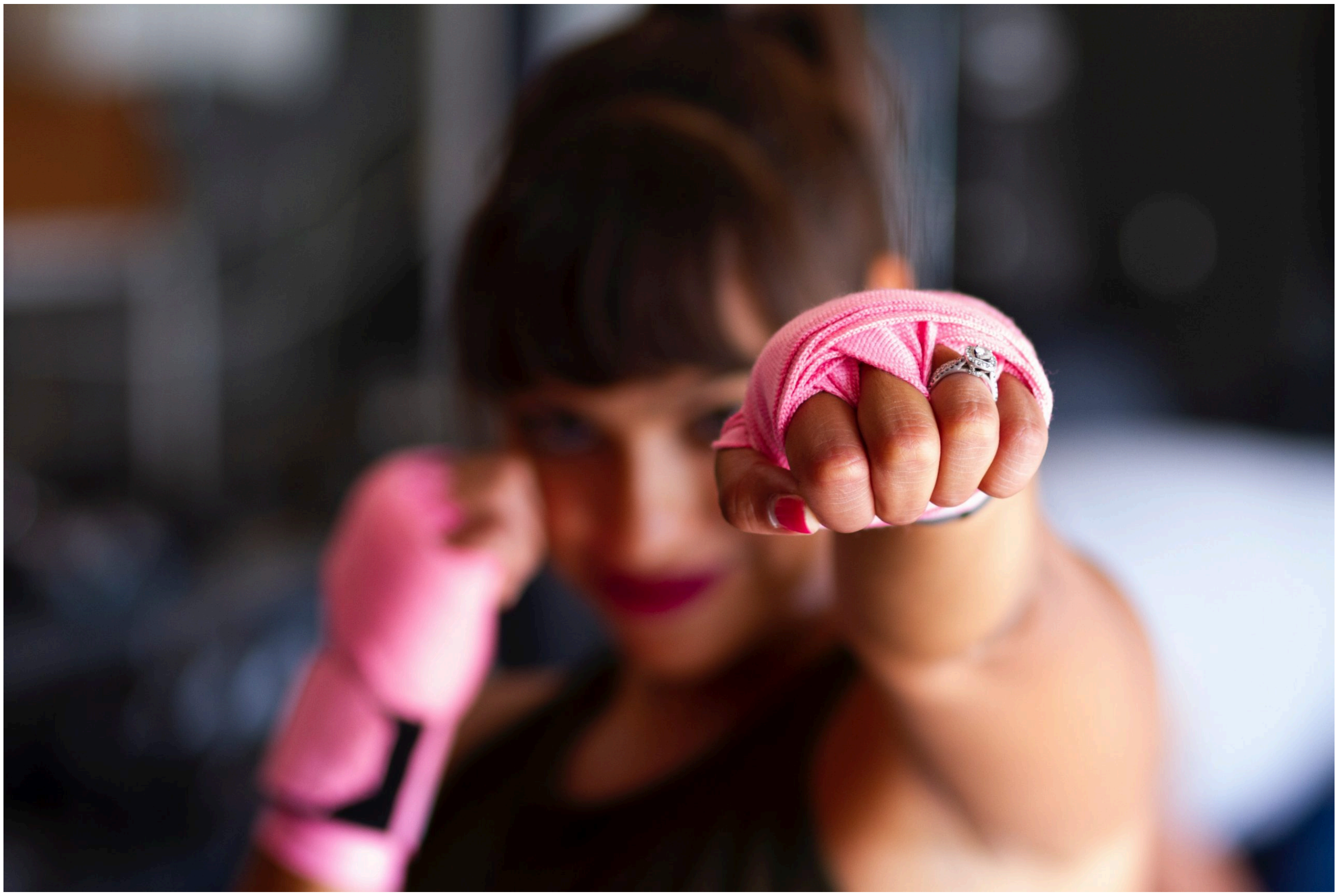
Pinkwashing



Pink washing is a deliberate attempt to deceive customers with the purest of intentions: some choose goods associated with breast cancer fundraising (identified by the pink ribbon), but many lack awareness about these items being carcinogenic and contributing to higher rates of cancer.

Born from the concept of greenwashing came “**pinkwashing**“—a concept that describes the act of making misleading claims to win customers over. Pinkwashing identifies brands that use the “Pink Ribbon”—a symbol of breast cancer awareness—to raise funds for breast cancer research. A number of brands, including car manufacturers, dairy companies, and personal hygiene and cosmetics makers, adorn their products with pink ribbons all the while these products are known to include carcinogens that cause (breast) cancer. At the very least the alignment of these brands to the breast cancer cause is misleading; but of greater concern is that this particular cause-related marketing plays on consumers heuristics to simply choose what might seem like the “best,” or the “right” product because it supports an important cause.

Student Op-Ed: Pinkwashing and the Pink Ribbon Symbol

The pink ribbon is one of the most widely recognized symbols in the United States and is an international symbol of breast cancer awareness (Pool, 2011). Marketers are now pinkwashing and using the pink ribbon symbol to influence consumer decisions and increase sales. Pinkwashing is when a company is supporting the cause of breast cancer or promoting a pink ribbon product while producing, manufacturing, or selling products linked to the disease (Pool, 2011). A variety of cause-related marketers are using breast cancer to guilt consumers into buying products that are not beneficial to them (Pool, 2011). Cause-related marketing refers to a type of marketing involving a mutually beneficial collaboration between a corporation and a non-profit company (Solomon, 2014). Many consumers believe that purchasing a product with a Pink Ribbon symbol will express moral support for women with breast cancer when in most cases this is untrue (Pool, 2011).

The study of *compensatory decisions rules* shows that when all things are equal, the company that is donating to a charity or has a good cause behind it, will likely be the product purchased (Solomon, 2014). The brand Yoplait has put a pink ribbon on the company's product and changed the product colour to pink during October to increase the likelihood of consumers purchasing the product (Pool, 2011). Yoplait is a pinkwasher because certain products from the company are made with milk from cows that have been injected with a synthetic hormone referred to as rBGH which has been known to have many health concerns, including cancer (Pool, 2011). Despite the Yoplait company making a small ten-cent donation to a breast cancer organization for every pink lid each consumer mails back to the company, the amount does not add up to be a lot of money (Pool, 2011). *Yoplait is pinkwashing because the company is marketing that they support the cause of breast cancer while selling products that may lead to cancer.*

Pinkwashing is commonly performed by marketers throughout the world to increase *exposure* (Pool, 2011). A Fuse Tea sales representative stated that Fuse Tea changed the colour of its bottle to pink during breast cancer awareness month and handed out their new product to runners who were supporting breast cancer (Pool, 2011). This action of making the bottle pink was to draw exposure to the product as they did not donate any of the proceeds to breast cancer. In addition, the Fused Tea company is a pinkwasher because their drink product is filled with artificial sugars which have been known to lead to cancer (Pool, 2011). It is hypocritical for Fuse Tea to make their product pink in attempt to increase exposure to breast cancer supporters because their product is known to be unhealthy (Pool, 2011).

I recently became aware that, "the National Cancer Institute's annual budget is $1.8 billion, but only 5 percent goes towards cancer prevention" (Pool, 2011). I am shocked by this statement and feel that companies are using *cause related marketing* as an excuse to make more money. In addition, I don't understand what my valuable money is going towards when donating to a company. I have noticed that backlash by consumers has raised awareness of the misuse of the pink ribbon and cause- related marketing,

> but I am still shocked by how easily consumers are manipulated by certain companies. Thankfully, there is an amazing “Think Before You Pink” campaign that demands transparency and accountability on the part of companies that align themselves with breast cancer. In conclusion, I have learned to now be more aware of products and their ingredients along with question what companies are donating my money towards.

The willful blindness that guides corporations and global conglomerates in cause-related marketing ventures can also be paralleled with what we are witnessing around climate change. The wealthiest and most powerful companies and nations are contributing to the global demise of women’s health and climate degradation. KPU student Julie Hartman explores this connection in her op-ed below.

Student Op-Ed: (Pink-)Washing Away the Cause — Manipulating Consumers Through Cause-Related Marketing Campaigns

As consumers become more concerned with making smarter and more responsible purchasing decisions, companies become more concerned with improving their Corporate Social Responsibility ("CSR") as a means to generate customer sales (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015). One way in which companies can improve their CSR efforts is through cause-related marketing which is a "type of marketing that involves a collaboration between a for profit business and a non-profit organization for mutual benefit" (Solomon et al., 2015). Sometimes companies pursue cause-related marketing campaigns through unethical means, often negatively impacting the very consumer they are supposedly attempting to please; such is the case with "pink-washing" (Pool, 2011) a concept we'll examine more closely here.

The pink ribbon that is the symbol of breast cancer may look innocent, but it is actually rooted in manipulation. *Colour* "is a powerful marketing tool that significantly influences consumer purchases, so much so that it accounts for 85 per cent of the reason why someone decides to purchase a product" (Kumar, 2017). Feelings and phrases associated with specific colours subconsciously influence consumer decision making (Kumar, 2017). Pink evokes feelings of universal love, friendship, and harmony; and is associated with phrases such as "tickled pink" which means "to feel happy or content", and "in the pink" which means "to be healthy" (Bourn, 2010). Combined, these *associations* give consumers a warm fuzzy feeling inside, making it the perfect colour to use when developing a cause-related marketing campaign. Plaster it all over products that claim to "support breast cancer" and consumers are sure to believe the pink ribbon narrative (Pool, 2011).

Pink-washing, as described by Breast Cancer Action who coined the term, is when companies or organizations claim to care about breast cancer by promoting a pink ribbon product while producing products that are linked to the disease ("4 Questions…," n.d.). While awareness campaigns, such as Komen for the Cure, are "trendy", they don't do much to make a positive impact (Pool, 2011) They stress the importance of self-exams and early detection knowing that it doesn't work for everyone. These campaigns often claim they are trying to "find a cure" but deflect when asked why they don't try to find the cause of breast cancer itself. Focusing on the cause—or prevention—of this disease stands in direct opposition to those who not only profit off breast cancer, but do so while continuing to produce products containing known carcinogens (Pool, 2011).

Globalization has led to the spread of breast cancer campaigns into new regions, with their carcinogenic products in tow – resulting in increased risks of breast cancer in countries where it previously had not been a major health risk (Pool, 2011). It can be argued that this cause-related marketing campaign does more harm than good, in relation to the cause that it promotes.

When I reflect on pink-washing through the eye of an environmentalist I can see many similarities between it and "*greenwashing*". The shared idea is that both seek to convince consumers that their organizations are supporting causes while simultaneously causing serious harm behind the scenes. Less apparent, however, is the fact that both types of campaigns have a highly influential global presence.

Although breast cancer and *climate change* may be issues invisible to some, they still negatively impact a large global population. This invisibility is perhaps the biggest hurdle in fighting climate change. Wealthy, developed countries have a significantly greater carbon footprint than those of developing nations who will experience the most devastating impacts of climate change. Because those living in developed countries cannot see the impact first-hand and the concept of the Earth dying feels so abstract and scary to them, it is easier to ignore the problem than to approach it head on. I find this to parallel consumers of pink ribbon products in the marketplace: they do so in good faith yet continue to be blissfully unaware of the foul practices of the companies involved. They are unable to see the bigger picture because they are blinded by the happy smiling faces of women featured in the campaigns. With all the pink and the joy, it's almost an abstract concept to imagine breast cancer being a deadly disease. And so, we remain detached from those who face the daily reality of breast cancer unless we know someone living with it, experience it ourselves, or take it upon ourselves to dig deeper than what is portrayed in marketing and the media.

Materialism & the Conscientious Consumer

Will money make you happy? A certain level of income is needed to meet our needs, and very poor people are frequently dissatisfied with life (Diener & Seligman, 2004). However, having more and more money has diminishing returns — higher and higher incomes make less and less difference to happiness. Wealthy nations tend to have higher average life satisfaction than poor nations, but the United States has not experienced a rise in life satisfaction over the past decades, even as income has doubled. The goal is to find a level of income that you can live with and earn. Don't let your aspirations continue to rise so that you always feel poor, no matter how much money you have. Research shows that materialistic people often tend to be less happy, and putting your emphasis on relationships and other areas of life besides just money is a wise strategy. Money can help life satisfaction, but when too many other valuable things are sacrificed to earn a lot of money — such as relationships or taking a less enjoyable job — the pursuit of money can harm happiness.

It is important to always keep in mind that high **materialism** seems to lower life satisfaction — valuing money over other things such as relationships can make us dissatisfied. When people think money is more important than everything else, they seem to have a harder time being happy. And unless they make a great deal of money, they are not on average as happy as others. Perhaps in seeking money they sacrifice other important things too much, such as relationships, spirituality, or following their true interests. Or it may be that materialists just can never get enough money to fulfill their dreams — they always want more.

Student Op-Ed: The Quick Fix

In a society where materialism corrupts peoples' lives, "Minimalism: A documentary About the Important Things" (D'Avella, 2015), aims to show how your life can be better with less. People have become so accustomed to feeling they need these material items, that they don't think twice about the purchase as they assume happiness is a given. With this mindset, consumers are wired to be dissatisfied with what they have. To be able to transition to a minimalist life and live happier and financially free, consumers must eradicate their compulsive and addictive consumption behaviours.

When you think of addiction, drugs, alcohol or gambling most likely come to mind. However, addiction can manifest itself where you may least expect it. "Consumer addiction is a physiological dependency on products or services" (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015). Over the course of the last decade, Amazon has quickly become one of the most addictive sources of consumer goods. More than 71 per cent of Americans are Prime members and more than 46 per cent of them buy something once a week (Moore, 2019). Addiction is defined as "the fact or condition of being addicted to a particular substance, thing or activity.", and yet drug, alcohol and other substance addictions are viewed with such negativity, whereas consumption addiction (shopaholics) are met with a light and playful title.

Shopaholics have all the same symptoms of any other addict, including withdrawal. Addicted consumers do all this shopping to get that "quick fix" to feed the urge. Consumers must convince themselves that they need every item they buy because they will never admit they have a problem. Because of addictive consumption, many consumers are living beyond their means and it is truly ruining their lives. To take back control of their lives, the best thing consumers can do is attempt to convert to a minimalist life and free themselves from the virus that is, consumer addiction.

On the other side of things, compulsive addiction also ruins many households. "Compulsive consumption refers to repetitive shopping, often excessive, done as an antidote to tension, anxiety, depression or boredom" (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015). There are many reasons why people experience. Ultimately, the feeling of depression and anxiety were only buried below the surface (D'Avella, 2015). Buying exactly what you need, and nothing more, not only saves you money, but helps those feelings as well. "Stripping your belongings down to the bare minimum feels like you are taking a heavily weighted blanket off of your shoulders" (D'Avella, 2015).

I believe that we, as a society, need to absorb certain aspects of the minimalist lifestyle. Does that mean we should all live in tiny houses and have one outfit? No, it does not. We should attempt to eradicate the negative behaviours associated with our addictive and compulsive consumption to cleanse ourselves. Adopting the minimalist lifestyle will not only help our mental health, but it will financially free you from the strain of consumption (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015).

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CHAPTER REFLECTIONS

Continue Learning

1. Consumer decision making isn't nearly as straight forward as, "need/want > buy". Making choices in a world of abundance can be an intense and often discouraging process. Watch this short Ted Talk by Dr. Sheena Iyengar about how to make choosing easier. What lessons should marketers take away from Dr. Iyengar's research and recommendations?
2. As consumers we are often faced with the question (or dilemma) of what to do with our "stuff" when we're done with it. Throw it away? Add to the landfills in and around our cities? Donate? Repurpose? One popular form of disposal is called "lateral cycling." Explore lateral cycling as a marketing concept and a lifestyle related to anti-consumerist movements.
3. What do upcycling and Habitat for Humanity have in common? Explore the Habitat for Humanity website to learn more about how upcycling factors into their building and design practices.
4. How does "Upcycle That" turn peoples' trash into treasures? How can disposable consumer products be repositioned into luxury purchases? Learn more about Upcycle That's community and marketplace.
5. Watch this video related to lateral cycling that shows how one woman created a movement by re-purposing children's' dolls. What is marketing's responsibility when it comes to disposal options and designing for longevity?
6. What does it say about our consumption habits that in Canada alone, the food waste problem costs us $31 billion? We buy and we waste. We buy more, and then waste more. Why is there such a need for abundance, and can we change our behaviours and attitudes towards food waste to help reduce the negative impacts it has on climate change? This is by far one of the most concerning issues around food waste. Watch this video where John Oliver tackles the food waste problem in the US. As a consumer, which aspects of the food waste problem troubles you the most? What changes would you like to see in…yourself, society, and government to help address the problems of food waste? How are marketers responsible for contributing to the problem and what can they do to eliminate it?
7. What are the consequences of advertising to children? Consider food marketing: what impact does advertising junk food have on children? What about toys? What standards and expectations do these create in children and how can advertising to children evolve into excessive consumption? Learn more about Quebec's Consumer Protection Act. Do you think banning advertisements to children could curb excessive consumption in our society? What role can legislation play in changing attitudes and behaviours in society?
8. See Green America's 9 Cool Ways to Avoid Sweatshops. Discuss how a marketing campaign could be devised to persuade more corporations to actively avoid the use of sweatshops for production.
9. Perhaps one of the most unique campaigns of 2016 came from Patagonia, a well-known brand

committed to sustainability, who actually encouraged consumers to NOT purchase their products. Imagine that! This Drum article discusses the campaign and Patagonia's embrace of anti-consumerism with the intent to inspire more conscious consumption. Discuss Patagonia's anti-consumerism: can the brand attract more consumers by encouraging them to "buy less"? Will Patagonia inspire consumers to engage in more "conscious consumption"?

TOPIC 3. SOCIOLOGY OF FASHION AND DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS

Learning Objectives

Upon completing this section, students should:

1. Explain the unique aspects of fashion- related consumer behavior with examples of style tribes.
2. Describe the different stages of innovation diffusion.
3. Explain the process of consumer fashion innovations adoption with examples.

DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION

Fashion innovations often appear as new ideas to consumers. This may include a new garment type that is completely different from existing garments or is a common item used in an innovative way or targeting a very different market. Women in the mid-1800 wearing "pants" was one such example—women were not the target market for pants at all.

Rogers (1962) proposed the concept of diffusion of innovation and described consumers' acceptance of new ideas and trends in a bell-shaped curve that identifies five types of consumers:

1. **Innovators** (2.5% of the population): Consumers who are willing to take risks of trying new things.
2. **Early Adaptors** (13.5%): Consumers who are willing to take some risks and typically assume some opinion leadership roles.
3. **Early Majority** (34%): Consumers who need to be more informed before deciding to adopt an innovation.
4. **Late Majority** (34%): Consumers who require more evidence to establish expectations of the innovations and often accept them due to peer pressure.
5. **Laggards** (16%): Consumers who prefer no change and may not adopt an idea until a style is an "old fashion."

Types of innovation

Products evolve and ideas progress at different paces, causing some innovative products to be more easily accepted by consumers than others.

According to the effect of these innovations on consumers' established behavior, we can classify innovation in three categories to help us determine the level of education needed to help promote them (Sirgy et al., 2014; Robertson, 1967):

1. **Continuous:** These innovations have the least disruption to consumers' established lifestyles. Think about the progression from rotary dial landline phones to push-button phones.
2. **Dynamically continuous:** These innovations disrupt consumers' usual use of a certain product but do not radically alter them. Think about the progression from a stationed landline phone to a cordless landline phone and to a cellular phone.
3. **Discontinuous:** These innovations drastically change consumers' lifestyles. Think about the introduction of smart phones: They are cellular phones, but they are portable handheld computers

that provide location-based services.

Keep in mind that these categories are all based on consumers' evaluations and perceptions and may differ depending on consumers' demographics, such as generation cohorts.

Discussion

What do you think of Instagram and TikTok's role in diffusing fashion ideas as opposed to couture brands' fashion shows and magazines?

Evaluation of innovations

Like all other choices consumers make in their daily life, they evaluate innovations as an option among many before deciding whether to adopt them. This decision, however, is not as easy, as it may involve many uncertainties. For example, in addition to paying for the innovation, one may not be sure if it will function as expected, whether people around them would approve this purchase, whether the product suits them well, or even if they are confident enough to make the product work. Understanding these associated risks helps consumers make the decision to buy or not, and mitigating these uncertainties helps consumers to accept the product more easily. According to Rogers (2010), consumers evaluate innovations on these four aspects:

1. **Relative advantage:** Consumers evaluate the extent to which this innovation is superior in some important way to existing products.
2. **Compatibility:** Consumers consider the degree to which an innovation fits with their personal needs, values, lifestyles, and past experiences. Think about an innovative technology product that can easily sync with your other devices as well as fit your personal style aesthetically!
3. **Complexity:** Consumers evaluate the levels of difficulties to understand and use the innovation. The easier it is to use the product, the more likely people will adopt the innovation.
4. **Trialability:** Consumers need to assess the innovation. Trialability is the is the degree to which consumers perceive an innovation may be tried out. While many innovations in tangible products or services format can be tried out, some fashion innovations cannot be tried out, such as a new haircut as it cannot be undone in a short period of time.

WHY DO CONSUMERS WEAR CLOTHES?

Dress Theories

“Dress is an intentional and unintentional modification of appearance, what people do to their bodies to maintain, manage, and alter appearance” (Reddy-Best, 2020). Dressing is an important aspect in our everyday life, yet it can be a complex decision about what to buy and what to wear at a specific location, time, and occasion.

Knowing the reasons that people wear what they wear helps merchandisers offer the products that satisfy consumer needs and, at times, help create a new culture. Many scholars have their own perspectives on the reasons that people wear clothes. The most time-tested postulation may be the four theories proposed by Dunlap (1928):

1. **Modesty Theory:** Originating from the legend of the Garden of Eden, this theory holds that clothing was originally donned to cover genital parts. The practice has changed depending on what people consider “modest” as sexual self-conscious has been refined over time.
2. **Immodesty Theory:** This theory maintains the salacious motivation for wearing clothes by arguing that people wear clothes to attract attention to certain parts of their body. This may be seen in some gown designs that emphasize upper body curves through exaggerated deep v-necklines.
3. **Protection Theory:** People wear clothes to protect themselves from environmental and physical harm. For example, people wear hats and mittens during winter and a wetsuit when surfing.
4. **Adornment Theory:** This theory maintains the notion of “attraction grabbing” but less in a sexual way. It has been developed to include motivation that involves personal decorations and aesthetic expressions. This may include *external adornment*, such as handbags and hair accessories, and *bodily adornment*, such as tattoos, plastic surgeries, and make-up.

However, in more recent research, scholars have focused more on the connection between identity and clothing choices on top of aesthetic expressions that were connected to adornment theory.

Consumers make choices about what they wear and how they appear in order to communicate who they are and who they want to be, that is, their identity (Kaiser, 2012). For example, you may wear a Cyclone T-shirt to show your identity as a cyclone when the ISU football team plays the University of Iowa and you will avoid the colors representing the opposing team. At the same time, you may aspire to dress professionally to impress your colleagues during your summer internship at a company that you’d like to work at in the future.

Tensions

From a sociology point of view, fashion develops as a result of a variety of social tensions. These tensions may arise over gender, body, status, and social regulations and push people to adopt and adapt certain outfits or appearances over time.

Eventually, they changed how people viewed these styles. For example, the women's suffrage movement in the mid-19th century that called for reformation of physical freedom for women, in addition to other women rights, pushed for the adoption of bloomers. Bloomers are typically loose-fitted pants. Unlike the more confining and silhouette-emphasizing garments that women wore long ago, such as corsets and layers of petticoats, bloomers provided freedom of movement and symbolized the evolving gender roles. They were gradually accepted by the wider public as a typical outfit for women.

Fun exploration: Read this article written by Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell from *the Atlantic* about women's suffrage and the struggle for women's rights and wearing pants. https://www.theatlantic.com/author/kimberly-chrisman-cambell/

Style tribes

This term refers to distinctive groups or subcultures within a society that share similar fashion choices, tastes, and cultural preferences. These groups often form around a shared set of beliefs, values, and aesthetics, leading to the development of a unique and identifiable style within their community. This term was coined by anthropologist and photographer Ted Polhemus who analyzed street styles and the connection between progress in fashion and identity.

Members of a style tribe typically adopt specific clothing, accessories, hairstyles, and other elements that distinguish them from other groups and signal their affiliation to the tribe. These subcultures may emerge as a response to shared interests, social issues, music, art, or political beliefs and therefore form a shared social identity.

A great example of such a subculture and style tribe is punk. The punk spirit is associated with ideas such as non-conformity, anti-authoritarianism, and anti-corporatism . Punk fashion is often characterized by torn jeans, leather jackets, spiked armbands, DIY ornamentation of clothes with studs, and political statements. Vivien Westwood, a UK designer, is particularly known for her role as the punk fashion pioneer.

It's important to note that style tribes can vary significantly based on geographical location, cultural context, and historical periods. They play a crucial role in shaping fashion trends, pushing the boundaries of creativity and challenging societal norms surrounding appearance and self-expression.

Fun exploration

Check out Ted Polhemus's online gallery for pictures of punk fashion he took and excerpts from his research and books.

TOPIC 4. PERCEPTION

Learning Objectives

In this section, we will learn about **perception** and how marketers use **sensory marketing** and the **perceptual process** to **position** brands in the marketplace.

Upon completing this section, students should:

1. Explain the role of sensory stimuli and sensory receptors.
2. Distinguish between “sensation” and “perception.”
3. Identify and explain the key elements in the perceptual process.
4. Describe how marketers develop positioning strategies.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=33#h5p-1

- Absolute threshold: A term that refers to the smallest (minimal) level of a stimuli (e.g. sound; sight, taste) that can still be detected at least half of the time.Attention: Following “exposure” in the perceptual process, Attention describes the dedicated effort and focus we give to incoming sensory information (e.g. sights, sounds).
- Differential threshold (“JND”): The differential threshold—also known as the JND or just noticeable difference—refers to the minimum difference in intensity that can be detected between two objects (e.g. the size of two bags of potato chips or the subtle difference in two logo designs).
- Exposure: This term refers to the vast amount of stimuli that surround us and that we come into contact with on a regular basis. In marketing this refers to the massive amount of commercial advertisements, commercials, products, branding, packaging, etc.
- Guerilla Marketing: A type of experiential advertising that is highly engaging, unanticipated, unique, unconventional, innovative, and designed with the intent to be memorable and become viral.
- Hype: Hype is a form of intense publicity and promotion that helps drive up the value of consumer goods and services. Consumers and resellers use social media platforms to exchange information and discuss products that are rare and sought-after are “hyping up” a good, which often results in a higher resale price.
- Interpretation: Following exposure and attention, Interpretation is the third part of the perceptual process and occurs when we give meaning to information and messages that have gained our attention.
- Limen: A threshold (like an invisible line) that separates what one can perceive and what one can’t perceive: stimuli (sounds, sights) that fall below the limen are considered “subliminal” (not detectable, or below our own awareness level) and stimuli above the limen we detect and are aware of.
- Perception: A term used to describe the process we undergo when we organize and interpret the sensations we experience. Perception gives us the ability to interpret meaning of what our sensory receptors are experiencing.
- Perceptual defense: In a marketing context, this occurs when consumers distort or ignore advertising messages that we may feel are personally threatening, uncomfortable, or even culturally unacceptable.
- Perceptual filters: When we take new information in, we organize and interpret it based on our prior experiences as well as our cultural norms. Perceptual filters help us make sense of new

information and reduce anxiety when faced with the unknown (uncertainties).

- Perceptual mapping: A visual and graphic display (e.g. often a grid) that illustrates the perceptions customers have of a group of competing brands.
- Perceptual process: A process that begins when our sensory receptors (eyes, ears, tongue, nose, and skin) come in contact with sensory stimuli (sight, sounds, tastes, odours, and textiles) followed by the degree to which we pay attention to these stimuli and the meaning we draw from them (interpretation).
- Perceptual system: A system informed by our senses and sensory memories that help us interpret and understand the environment around us.
- Perceptual vigilance: In a marketing context, this occurs when consumers pay more attention (committed focus) to advertising messages that are relevant to our current state of being and/or meet our current unmet needs and wants.
- Positioning: A strategy developed by marketers to help influence how their target market (consumers) perceives a brand compared to the competition.
- Repositioning: This process involves changing the positioning of a brand so that the target market perceives the brand differently than before and anticipates different expectations and experiences compared to the competition.
- Salience: A term used to describe objects or stimuli that attract and hold our attention because we find them important relevant, prominent, or coming into our lives in a timely manner.
- Schemata: Described as being like “databases” in our memory, the schemata contains stored information based on our past experiences that help us make sense of and interpret new experiences.
- Selective attention: A term that describes our focused commitment to only some of the stimuli and senses that we come in contact with, based on what is relevant to our needs and/or interests.
- Selective distortion: A term used to describe situations in which people (consumers) interpret messages and information (advertisements/product labeling) in a way that supports their pre-existing beliefs.
- Selective exposure: When we deliberately choose to come in contact with information from particular sources (e.g. social media, videos, advertisements, podcasts) we are engaging in selective exposure.
- Selective retention: A term used to describe when we forget information, despite it being important for us to retain and interpret (e.g. public service announcements that may help us live a better life, but we do not retain because we are uncomfortable with the idea of confronting our habits and/or behaviours).
- Sensation: The awareness we experience when our sensory receptors are engaged with the environment around us.
- Sensory adaptation: This terms describes a decreased sensity to stimulus (information/messages)

after a long period of constant exposure. For consumers, this may be described as a form of (marketing/advertising) fatigue where they tune out (become less sensitive to) the same stimulus (ad) over time.

- Sensory marketing: Sensory marketing involves engaging consumers with one or more of their senses (see, touch, taste, smell, hear) with the intention to capture their attention and store the sensory information for future processing.
- Sensory receptors: A term used to encompass our eyes, ears, tongue, nose, and skin which come into contact with sensory stimuli — the environment around us — made up of sights, sounds, tastes, odours, and textiles.
- Stimuli: A smell, sound, object or anything else that engages our brain to pay attention and interpret what we have come in contact with in our environment.
- Subliminal perception/Subliminal advertising: The belief that “hidden messages” in marketing are effectively influencing consumers to engage in specific decision making behaviour (e.g. secret messages telling consumers to buy certain brands).
- Weber’s Law: This law states that the differential threshold (the just noticeable difference) is a constant proportion (or ratio) of the original stimulus.

SENSORY SYSTEMS

The topics of **sensation** and **perception** are among the oldest and most important in all of psychology. People are equipped with senses such as sight, hearing and taste that help us to take in the world around us. Amazingly, our senses have the ability to convert real-world information into electrical information that can be processed by the brain. The way we interpret this information — our perceptions — is what leads to our experiences of the world.

Sensation is the awareness resulting from the stimulation of a sense organ, and *perception* is the organization and interpretation of sensations. Sensation and perception work seamlessly together to allow us to experience the world through our sensory receptors (our eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin) but also to combine what we are currently learning from the environment with what we already know about it to make judgments and to choose appropriate behaviours.

Sensory Systems

Humans possess powerful sensory capacities that allow us to sense the kaleidoscope of sights, sounds, smells, and tastes that surround us. Our eyes detect light energy and our ears pick up sound waves. Our skin senses touch, pressure, hot, and cold. Our tongues react to the molecules of the foods we eat, and our noses detect scents in the air. The human **perceptual system** is wired for accuracy, and people are exceedingly good at making use of the wide variety of information available to them (Stoffregen & Bardy, 2001).

The *eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin* sense the world around us, and in some cases perform preliminary information processing on the incoming data. But by and large, we do not experience sensation — we experience the outcome of perception, the total package that the brain puts together from the pieces it receives through our senses and that the brain creates for us to experience. When we look out the window at a view of the countryside, or when we look at the face of a good friend, we don’t just see a jumble of colours and shapes — we see, instead, an image of a countryside or an image of a friend (Goodale & Milner, 2006).

Sensory Receptors: Seeing

Whereas other animals rely primarily on hearing, smell, or touch to understand the world around them, human beings rely primarily on *vision*. A large part of our cerebral cortex is devoted to seeing, and we have substantial visual skills. *Seeing* begins when light falls on the eyes, initiating the process of transduction. Once this visual information reaches the visual cortex, it is processed by a variety of neurons that detect colours, shapes, and motion, and that create meaningful perceptions out of the incoming stimuli.

It has been estimated that the human visual system can detect and discriminate among seven million colour variations (Geldard, 1972), but these variations are all created by the combinations of the three primary colours: red, green, and blue. The shade of a colour, known as hue, is conveyed by the wavelength of the light that enters the eye (we see shorter wavelengths as more blue and longer wavelengths as more red), and we detect brightness from the intensity or height of the wave (bigger or more intense waves are perceived as brighter).

Understanding Color

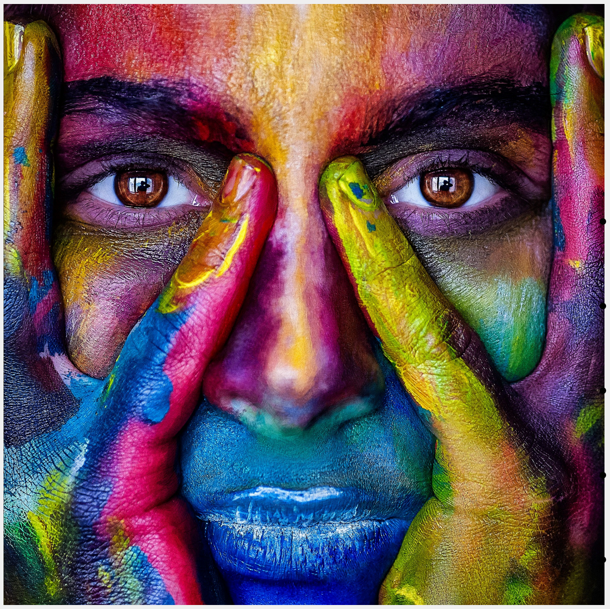
Colour has always appealed to our visual senses and is commonly used as a marketing tool. It has a powerful psychological impact on consumers' behaviours and choices: studies have shown that particular colours simulate certain areas of the brain to promote excitement (DashBurst, 2018). Colour can often be the main reason a consumer purchases a product or service.

Have you ever wondered why the colour red is associated with Coke, while Facebook is blue? Depending on the brand, its position in the market, and the feelings it wants to evoke in its consumers, colour choice is serious business and not to be done without considerable thought and care.

As expressed in Dashburst's 2018 article, "McDonald's chooses high-energy colors like red & yellow which appeal to children, kindle appetites and create a sense of urgency. Of course, Ronald McDonald himself is popular with the kids, but he's also sure to agitate parents quickly. This facilitates faster customer turnover" (Dashburst, 2018).

On the other hand, Starbucks and its infamous use of green conveys a sense of "relaxation in their cafes, inviting customers to come in for a coffee break during a stressful day" (Dashburst, 2018).

Clearly, choosing the "right" colours for a brand requires consideration of the kind of experience a brand wants to have with its consumers.



Jesse Richardson, in his article, "3 Principles for High Conversions on Your Website" (2015), provides a brief summary of what many popular brand colours represent:

- Blue: Peace, Security, Reliable (Facebook, NASA, Dell)
- Black: Power, Intelligence, Strength (Nike, SONY, New York Times)
- Grey: Balance, Calm, Neutral (Honda, Apple, WIKIPEDIA)
- Green: Healthy, Growth, Restore (The Body Shop, Starbucks, Holiday Inn)
- Purple: Deep, Compassion, Respectable (Yahoo, Hallmark, Cadbury)
- Orange & Yellow: Warmth, Freedom, Social (Fanta, Mastercard, Nickelodeon)
- Red: Courage, Bold, Active (Red Bull, LEGO, Nintendo)

Colours are also highly characteristic and represented in different cultures; psychological effects and interpretations vary depending on the specific culture. A colour can have powerful influence on religious beliefs, politics, and art (Velarde, n.d.). For example, in the United States, the colour pink can often by synonymous with femininity and thus stereotypical representations of hyper-femininity such as princesses and ballet dancers. Conversely, in Japan, pink has a "masculine association," according to Kate Smith (n.d.). "The annual spring blooming of the pink-blossomed cherry trees (the Sakura) is said to represent the young Japanese warriors who fell in battle in the prime of life (the Samurai; Smith, n.d.).

In many Asian, and particularly Chinese cultures, the colour red is strongly association with important cultural rituals and celebrations, such as marriage. It's a sign of success and happiness. In South Africa, however, red represents mourning, grief, and sadness.

Sensory Receptors: Hearing

Like vision and all the other senses, *hearing* begins with transmission. Sound waves that are collected by our ears are converted into neural impulses, which are sent to the brain where they are integrated with past experience and interpreted as the sounds we experience. The human ear is sensitive to a wide range of sounds, from the faint tick of a clock in a nearby room to the roar of a rock band at a nightclub, and we have the ability to detect very small variations in sound. But the ear is particularly sensitive to sounds in the same frequency as the human voice. A mother can pick out her child's voice from a host of others, and when we pick up the phone we quickly recognize a familiar voice. In a fraction of a second, our auditory system receives the sound waves, transmits them to the auditory cortex, compares them to stored knowledge of other voices, and identifies the caller.

Using Music to Build Connections

Consider how different your choice in music is from a workout at the gym, to doing homework on the weekend. We all have an intimate relationship with music in that it evokes a very emotional response and has a direct effect on our mood. Ever tried to go for a fast run listen to slow music? Brands will either select music or have original music written for them so consumers' hearing senses are engaged when interacting with the brand. Think about your favourite retail store, what kind of music do they play? Does it affect your mood and the length of time you spend in the store (I guarantee the brand is hoping so!).

Sensory Receptors: Tasting

Taste is important not only because it allows us to enjoy the food we eat, but, even more crucial, because it leads us toward foods that provide energy (sugar, for instance) and away from foods that could be harmful. Many children are picky eaters for a reason — they are biologically predisposed to be very careful about what they eat. Together with the sense of smell, taste helps us maintain appetite, assess potential dangers (such as the odour of a gas leak or a burning house), and avoid eating poisonous or spoiled food.

Our ability to taste begins at the taste receptors on the tongue. The tongue detects six different taste sensations, known respectively as sweet, salty, sour, bitter, piquancy (spicy), and umami (savory).

The Temptation of Sampling

One of the best ways to sell food and beverage products is to allow consumers to taste them. Sampling—whether it's at your favourite farmer's market or Costco—is an effective way to engage consumers with their taste receptors so they can evaluate a product beyond their visual interpretation of it. Farmer's Markets have grown exponentially in urban settings and have successfully managed to create a kind of shopping utopia for many consumers: I cannot resist the stalls that are lined end to end with boxes of fresh Okanagan peaches every summer when they come to Vancouver. The smell of those peaches, the perfect texture and shape of them, and then the freshly cut and ready to sample slices…well, as you can probably image, I walk away with a dozen or more. My perception based on this experience is that peaches grown in the Okanagan are the best, bar none!

Sensory Receptors: Smelling

We have approximately 1,000 types of odour receptor cells (Bensafi et al., 2004), and it is estimated that we can detect 10,000 different odours (Malnic, Hirono, Sato, & Buck, 1999). The receptors come in many different shapes and respond selectively to different *smells*. Like a lock and key, different chemical molecules fit into different receptor cells, and odours are detected according to their influence on a combination of receptor cells. Just as the 10 digits from 0 to 9 can combine in many different ways to produce an endless array of phone numbers, odour molecules bind to different combinations of receptors, and these combinations are decoded in the olfactory cortex. The sense of smell peaks in early adulthood and then begins a slow decline. By ages 60 to 70, the sense of smell has become sharply diminished. In addition, women tend to have a more acute sense of smell than men.

How Smells Create Preferences

Consumers have strong emotional reactions to scents and odours. While some of us may be easily seduced by the smell of fresh baking, roasted coffee, and fried chicken, these odours may not be universally appealing to everyone. I grew up eating Italian food in my home: garlic was never used sparingly, we preferred to follow the "more is more" approach to flavouring. But if you grew up eating food absent of garlic, you might find its smell overpowering and unappetizing. Therefore, it is important to consider a consumer's cultural background and how it informs their processing of different odours.

Sensory Receptors: Touching

The sense of *touch* is essential to human development. The skin, the largest organ in the body, is the sensory organ for touch. The skin contains a variety of nerve endings, combinations of which respond to particular types of pressures and temperatures. When you touch different parts of the body, you will find that some areas are more ticklish, whereas other areas respond more to pain, cold, or heat.

The Undeniable Power of Touch

Can you imagine buying towels without touching them first? No, I can't either. Our sense of touch is one of the most important ways we interact with products and interpret their meaning. Consider the products you prefer to purchase in person (for me, fruit and vegetables) versus online (milk, cereal, olive oil) in your everyday life. Now what about when you take a trip to the mall, or visit your favourite fashion boutique? Our need to touch is critical to our ability to make judgement calls: a particular shirt may feel too thin; a sweater too scratchy; a belt too stiff. Product packaging also encourages our desire to touch and engage in our haptic (touch) senses. The feel and shape of a bottle of Coke; the sleek elegance of a lipstick; and the smooth velvety box of a diamond ring all have important appeal and meaning to influence a consumer's preference and perception.

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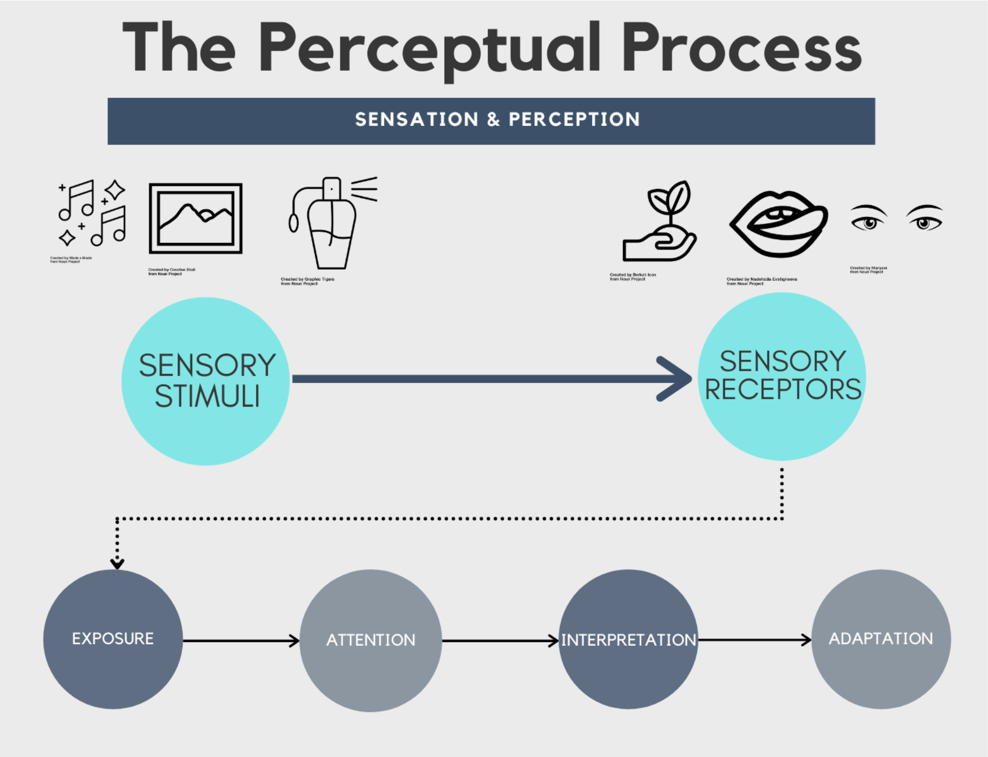
THE PERCEPTUAL PROCESS

Perception is how you interpret the world around you and make sense of it in your brain. You do so via stimuli that affect your different senses — sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste. How you combine these senses also makes a difference. For example, in one study, consumers were blindfolded and asked to drink a new brand of clear beer. Most of them said the product tasted like regular beer. However, when the blindfolds came off and they drank the beer, many of them described it as "watery" tasting (Ries, 2009). This suggests that consumers' visual interpretation alone can influence their overall attitude towards a product or brand.



The perceptual process begins when our sensory receptors (eyes, ears, tongue, nose, and skin) come in contact with sensory stimuli (sights, sounds, tastes, odours, and textiles) around us. Through our sensory system, we are exposed to an infinite amount of stimuli, some of which we pay attention to, and some we tune out completely. Those that receive our attention we evaluate and interpret their meaning based on our methods of cognitive and behavioural processing. After time, some of these stimuli become adapted and we seize to remark on their significance.

The Perceptual Process

Perception is the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting information. This process includes the perception of select **stimuli** that pass through our **perceptual filters**, are organized into our existing structures and patterns, and are then interpreted based on previous experiences. Although perception is a largely cognitive and psychological process, how we perceive the people and objects around us affects our communication. We respond differently to an object or person that we perceive favorably than we do to something we find unfavorable. But how do we filter through the mass amounts of incoming information, organize it, and make meaning from what makes it through our perceptual filters and into our social realities?

Ultimately, the perceptual process develops a consumer's perception of a brand and formulates the brand's position vis-à-vis the competition on what marketers call a **positioning** strategy.

The Importance of Perception

If consumers were to only rely on sensation, it is unlikely they would be able to draw any distinction between similar products. Peanut butter, cola, ice cream…each of these product categories have competitors vying to differentiate their products from one another. If you were to organize blind taste-tests with your friends where they could only rely on the sensation of taste, they may not be able to distinguish between them. So while sensation is what we experience when our sensory receptors are engaged, it is perception, that ultimately influences our consumer decisions and forms the basis of our preferences.

For marketers, having your brand stand out in a crowded and noisy marketplace is critical to success: playing to consumers' senses is "next level" marketing as these rich experiences can code a brand into the consumer's memory. Capturing the consumer's attention through stunning visual appeals, catchy sounds, tasty samples, delicious aromas and hands-on experiences (also known as **Guerilla Marketing**) have completely over-taken the passive advertisements and billboards of the past. When done successfully, **sensory marketing** transitions a brand from "barely being noticed" to earning a top position in the consumer's mind.

Exposure

We take in information through all five of our senses, but our perceptual field (the world around us) includes so many stimuli that it is impossible for our brains to process and make sense of it all.

Consumers are bombarded with messages on television, radio, magazines, the Internet, and even bathroom walls. The average consumer is exposed to about three thousand advertisements per day (Lasn, 1999). Consumers are online, watching television, and checking their phones simultaneously. Some, but not all, information makes it into our brains. Selecting information we see or hear (e.g., Instagram ads or YouTube videos) is called **selective exposure**.

Consumers are exposed to thousands of marketing images and messages on a daily basis. How many we actually pay attention to depends on our needs, wants, and the ability of marketers to stand out in a crowd.

Exposure speaks to the vast amount of commercial information—media messages, commercial, and other forms of advertisements—we are constantly subjected to on a daily basis.

In 2017, Forbes.com contributing writer Jon Simpson challenged readers to count how many brands they are exposed to from the moment they awake. From the bed to the shower to the breakfast table, how many brands have you already come in contact with? 10? 20? Then turn on your phone and start scrolling through your Twitter news feed…and now Instagram. Before you leave for work or school, the number of brands you've been exposed to likely climbs into the hundreds. Simpson claims that, "[d]igital marketing experts estimate that most Americans are exposed to around 1,000-4,000 ads each day" (Simpson, 2017).

Given this sea of images, sounds, and messages, how can we possibly make sense of any one brand's message? Consumers will devote a degree of mental processing to only those messages that relate to their needs, wants, preferences, and attitudes. Brands are banking on the fact that with higher degrees of exposure, at some point their message is going to "stick" and capture consumers' attention at just the right moment.

The **absolute threshold** of a sensation is defined as the intensity of a stimulus that allows an organism to just barely detect it. The absolute threshold explains why you don't smell the cologne someone is wearing in a classroom unless they are somewhat close to you.

The **differential threshold** (or just noticeable difference, also referred to as "JND"), refers to the change in a stimulus that can just barely be detected. In other words, it is the smallest difference needed in order to differentiate between two stimuli.

The German physiologist Ernst Weber (1795-1878) made an important discovery about the JND — namely, that the ability to detect differences depends not so much on the size of the difference but on the size of the difference in relation to the absolute size of the stimulus. **Weber's Law** maintains that the JND of a stimulus is a constant proportion of the original intensity of the stimulus.

As an example, if you have a cup of coffee that has only a very little bit of sugar in it (say one teaspoon), adding another teaspoon of sugar will make a big difference in taste. But if you added that same teaspoon to a cup of coffee that already had five teaspoons of sugar in it, then you probably wouldn't taste the difference as much (in fact, according to Weber's Law, you would have to add five more teaspoons to make the same difference in taste).

Another interesting application of Weber's Law is in our everyday shopping behaviour. Our tendency to perceive cost differences between products is dependent not only on the amount of money we will spend or save, but also on the amount of money saved relative to the price of the purchase. For example, if you were about to buy a soda or candy bar in a convenience store, and the price of the items ranged from $1 to $3, you would likely think that the $3 item cost "a lot more" than the $1 item. But now imagine that you were comparing between two music systems, one that cost $397 and one that cost $399. Probably you would think that the cost of the two systems was "about the same," even though buying the cheaper one would still save you $2.

Attention

Attention is the next part of the perception process, in which we focus our attention on certain incoming sensory information. Since we can't tune in to each and every one of the thousands of messages and images we're exposed to daily, we tend to only pay attention to information that we perceive to meet our needs or interests. This type of **selective attention** can help us meet critical needs and get things done.

Consider a hypothetical scenario: your car has finally broken down (for good) and you need to look for something new. You're feeling stressed about what this is going to cost: a new car, or even a decent used one, will set you back financially. Although car sharing has existed for years now, you've never given it any thought: haven't had to, actually. But now, you take notice of all the reserved parking spots for car sharing at school; and at the mall; and downtown. You start seeing car sharing cars on the road more than you remember seeing before. You start to wonder, "have these JUST appeared now, or has car sharing been this big all along, but I've never noticed it before now?"

This scenario points to the principle of **salience**: a situation in which we tend to pay attention to information that attracts our attention in a particular context. The thing attracting our attention is often something we might consider important, relevant, prominent, and timely. At other times, people forget information, even if it's quite relevant to them, which is called **selective retention**. Often the information contradicts the person's belief. A longtime chain smoker who forgets much of the information communicated during an anti-smoking commercial is an example. To be sure their advertising messages get through to you and you remember them, companies use repetition. Despite how tired we grow of seeing the same commercials over and over (and over, again), advertisers are hoping consumers will retain some of the messages for when a need or want for their brand emerges.

For many brands, however, this is an unacceptable way to get noticed! To have to wait until a consumer has a timely need isn't strategic or reliable. It could take…forever! Brand salience requires a brand to be top of mind when a consumer is ready to make a purchasing decision. It means the consumer, regardless of need and timing, already knows about you (who you are, what you're selling, and where to find you) and when it comes time to buy, they choose you over the competition. As you might have guessed, the problem is this: *how can a brand be noticed when it lacks salience?*

Five Ways to Command a Receiver’s Attention

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=40#h5p-2

- Size: Bigger stimuli tend to command more attention.
- Colour: Colour that differs from its surroundings since contrast helps to make one brand stand out from the competition.
- Position: In North America, ads on the right-hand page of a magazine get more attention than those on the left-hand side.
- Placement: Ads in places where you don’t expect to see them, such as walls of tunnels or on the ground in public spaces, get more attention because of their novel placements.
- Shock: Provocative content and eye-catching design can increase attention, benefit memory, and positively influence consumer behaviour (Dahl, et.al., 2003).

The Two Kinds of Perceptual Selectivity

Perceptual defense is defined as, "[a] tendency to distort or ignore information that is either personally threatening or culturally unacceptable" (Rice University, n.d.). This presents a serious challenge for some marketers, particularly those who are designing persuasive messaging that acts as a public service announcement (or PSA). Anti-smoking, anti-drinking & driving, and messaging that confronts an audience on dangerous or harmful behaviour is often ignored because the audience may not identify that the message is for them, or they may be too defensive to process the contents of the message. (This isn't to say that PSA's are a waste of time and resources, but instead to highlight the difficulty and complexity in creating effective marketing messages to change behaviours and attitudes when they speak so personally to us).

Perceptual vigilance on the other hand takes place when we, as consumers find ourselves in a position where we pay more attention to advertisements that meet our current needs and wants. While advertisements surround us on a day-to-day basis, we tune out those that are irrelevant or ill-suited to our particular situations. But when our car breaks down and we're thinking of buying a new one, we may start to "notice" car ads more. Or if we're considering planning a vacation, we may come to focus more on all the hotel and spa ads we largely ignored in the past.

Maximizing exposure with the intent to become noticed and make a strong impression on consumers is the reason why brands might engage in guerilla marketing. This form of marketing is often unconventional, unexpected, innovative, and memorable. Although it can be risky, when executed successfully guerilla marketing will result in word-of-mouth advertising and with any luck, become a viral sensation. Guerilla marketing differs from **hype**, which is defined as "extravagant or intensive publicity or promotion" ("Hype marketing," 2020) and is usually attributed to products that are rare or in limited supply. In resale markets, such as consumer second-hand markets, hype is a driving force of value for products that are perceived to have high social, emotional, and monetary value. Hype built on social media platforms that is created by resellers of rare and much sought-after sneakers, for example, helps to drive the price up beyond the sneakers' original retail prices.

What is the hidden message in that magazine ad you're looking at? Are you getting brainwashed by innocent-looking TV commercials that "order" you to buy a product? If you believe advertisers are doing their best to place "secret messages" all around you, you're not alone. **Subliminal perception** is a topic that has captivated the public for more than fifty years, despite the fact that there is virtually *no proof that this process has any effect on consumer behaviour*. Another word for perceptual threshold is **limen** (just remember "the secret of Sprite"), and we term stimuli that fall below the limen *subliminal*. So subliminal perception (supposedly) occurs when the stimulus is below the level of the consumer's awareness.

Subliminal or Sublime?

A survey of American consumers found that almost two-thirds believe in the existence of **subliminal advertising**, and more than one-half are convinced that this technique can get them to buy things they do not really want (Lev, 1991). They believe marketers design many advertising messages so the consumers perceive them unconsciously, or *below* the threshold of recognition. For example, several authors single out beverage ads as they point to ambiguous shapes in ice cubes they claim are actually women's bodies or erotic words. Most recently, ABC rejected a Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) commercial that invited viewers to slowly replay the ad to find a secret message, citing the network's long-standing policy against subliminal advertising. KFC argued that the ad wasn't subliminal at all because the company was telling viewers about the message and how to find it. The network wasn't convinced—but you should be (Ruggless, 2006). [1]

Like this KFC ad, most examples of subliminal advertising that people "discover" are not subliminal at all—on the contrary, the images are quite apparent. Remember, if you can see it or hear it, it's *not* subliminal; the stimulus is above the level of conscious awareness. Nonetheless, the continuing controversy about subliminal persuasion has been important in shaping the public's beliefs about advertisers' and marketers' abilities to manipulate consumers against their will.

Although some research suggests that subliminal messages can work under very specific conditions, this technique has very little applicability to advertising even if we wanted to resort to it. For one, an advertiser would have to send a message that's very carefully tailored to each individual rather than to a large audience. In addition, there are wide individual differences in threshold levels (what we're capable of consciously perceiving); for a message to avoid conscious detection by consumers who have low thresholds, it would have to be so weak that it would not reach those who have high thresholds.

However, a new study surely will add fuel to the long-raging debate. The researchers reported evidence that a mere thirty-millisecond exposure to a well-known brand logo can in fact influence behaviour; specifically the study found that people who were exposed to a quick shot of Apple's logo thought more creatively in a laboratory task (mission: come up with innovative uses for a brick) than did those who saw the IBM logo (Claburn, 2008). Apple will no doubt love the implication, but most other advertisers are too focused on efforts to persuade you when you're aware of what they're up to.

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[1]

Interpretation

Although selecting and organizing incoming stimuli happens very quickly, and sometimes without much conscious thought, interpretation can be a much more deliberate and conscious step in the perception process. **Interpretation** is the third part of the perception process, where we assign meaning to our experiences using mental structures known as schemata. **Schemata** are like databases of stored, related information that we use to interpret new experiences. We all have fairly complicated schemata that have developed over time as small units of information combined to make more meaningful complexes of information.

It's important to be aware of schemata because our interpretations affect our behaviour. For example, if you are doing a group project for class and you perceive a group member to be shy based on your schema of how shy people communicate, you may avoid giving them presentation responsibilities in your group project because *you* are of the belief that shy people may not make good public speakers. Schemata also guide our interactions, providing a script for our behaviours. We know, in general, how to act and communicate in a doctor's waiting room, in a classroom, on a first date, and on a game show. Even a person who has never been on a game show can develop a schema for how to act in that environment by watching *The Price Is Right*, for example. People go to great lengths to make shirts with clever sayings or act enthusiastically in hopes of being picked to be a part of the studio audience and hopefully become a contestant on the show.

We have schemata about individuals, groups, places, and things, and these schemata filter our perceptions before, during, and after interactions. As schemata are retrieved from memory, they are executed, like computer programs or apps on your smartphone, to help us interpret the world around us. Just like computer programs and apps must be regularly updated to improve their functioning, competent communicators update and adapt their schemata as they have new experiences.

Adaptation

A fundamental process of perception is **sensory adaptation** — a decreased sensitivity to a stimulus after prolonged and constant exposure. When you step into a swimming pool, the water initially feels cold, but after a while you stop noticing it. *After prolonged exposure to the same stimulus, our sensitivity toward it diminishes and we no longer perceive it.* The ability to adapt to the things that don't change around us is essential to our survival, as it leaves our sensory receptors free to detect the important and informative changes in our environment and to respond accordingly. We ignore the sounds that our car makes every day, which leaves us free to pay attention to the sounds that are different from normal, and thus likely to need our attention. Our sensory receptors are alert to *novelty* and are fatigued after constant exposure to the same stimulus.

As mentioned at the top of this page, consumers are exposed to thousands of advertising and marketing messages each day. While some ads can successfully break through the noise and capture our attention, over time we may just grow tired of the ad and it no longer interests us. When left unchanged, the ad fails and fades into the background. Tuning out advertisements is a marketer's nightmare (think of how much they've spent to get our attention in the first place!) The question for the marketer becomes this: *how much exposure is enough to garner attention, but not so much to reach a state of adaptation where the consumer no longer responds*?

When we experience a sensory stimulus that doesn't change, we stop paying attention to it. This is why we don't feel the weight of our clothing, hear the hum of a projector in a lecture hall, or see all the tiny scratches on the lenses of our glasses. When a stimulus is constant and unchanging, we experience sensory adaptation. During this process we become less sensitive to that stimulus. A great example of this occurs when we leave the radio on in our car after we park it at home for the night. When we listen to the radio on the way home from work the volume seems reasonable. However, the next morning when we start the car, we might be startled by how loud the radio is. We don't remember it being that loud last night. What happened? What happened is that we adapted to the constant stimulus of the radio volume over the course of the previous day. This required us to continue to turn up the volume of the radio to combat the constantly decreasing sensitivity. However, after a number of hours away from that constant stimulus, the volume that was once reasonable is entirely too loud. We are no longer adapted to that stimulus!

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POSITIONING

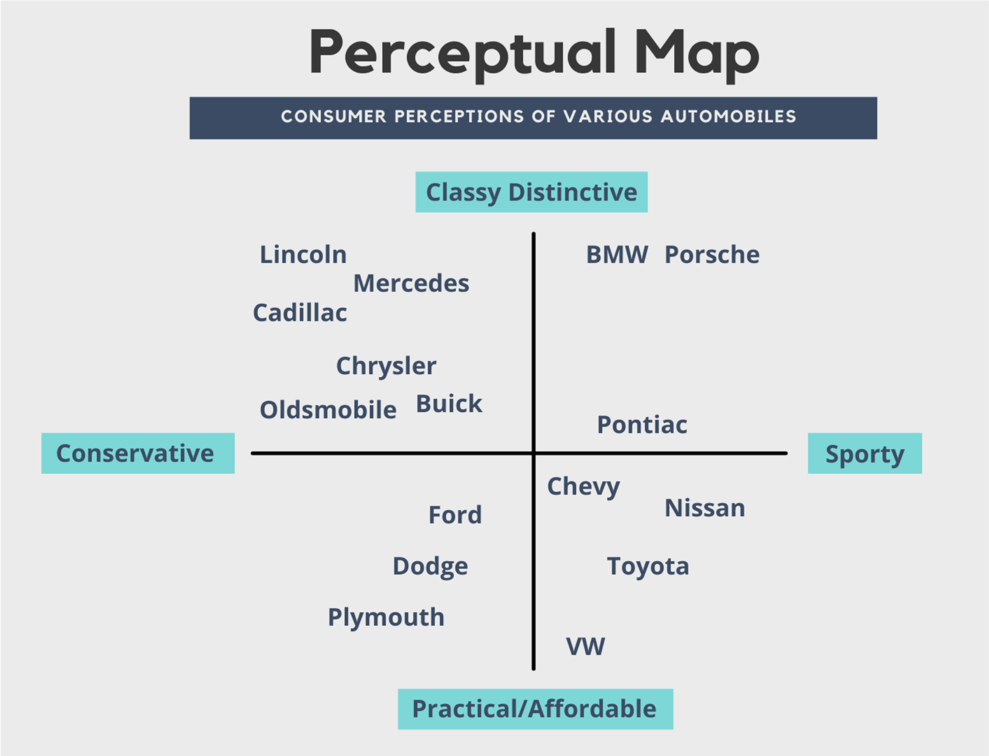
Positioning refers to the development of strategy that helps to influence how a particular market segment perceives a brand, good, or service in comparison to the competition. Positioning is all about defining a space in the mind of the customer — something that your customer thinks of and associates with your product.

Remember that positioning doesn't just mean what your target market thinks about your product. Rather, it's about how they think about it relative to competitors' products — your product is less expensive, performs better, or fits better with the customer's lifestyle. Positioning often relates to a brand's strategic objectives.

Perceptual Mapping & Positioning Dimensions

Perceptual mapping is a graphic display explaining the perceptions of customers with relation to product characteristics. Perceptual mapping is a diagrammatic technique used by marketers in an attempt to visually display the perceptions of customers or potential customers. Typically the position of a product, product line, brand, or company is displayed relative to their competition. Some perceptual maps use different size circles to indicate the sales volume or market share of the various competing products.

Perceptual maps commonly have two dimensions even though they are capable of having more than that. For example, in the perceptual map below, you can see consumer perceptions of various automobiles on the two dimensions of sportiness/conservative and classy/affordable. This sample of consumers felt that Porsche cars were the sportiest and classiest of the ones in the study. They felt that Plymouth cars were the most practical and conservative. Cars that are positioned close to each other were seen as similar on the relevant dimensions by the consumer. For example, consumers saw Buick, Chrysler, and Oldsmobile as similar: they are close competitors and form a competitive grouping. A company considering the introduction of a new model may look for an area on the map free from competitors or find a way to further differentiate and stand out from the crowd.



Consumer perceptions of automobiles can be mapped by comparing (X axis) how conservative they are versus how sporty they are; and (Y axis) how classy and distinct they are versus how practical and affordable they are. Based on the

Positioning is facilitated by perceptual mapping to determine the ideal points of consumers. This helps to determine if positioning should be functional, symbolic, or experiential. Strong positioning will enable a single product to appeal to different customers for different reasons. For example, two people are interested in buying a new car; one wants a car that is powerful and stylish while the other buyer is looking for a car that is reliable and safe and yet they buy the same exact car. One purchase solved a problem and exemplifies functional positioning while the other purchase is an example of symbolic and/or experiential positioning.

Positioning Statements

After marketers work through the process of homing in on the best positioning strategy, they arrive at the final step: the **positioning statement**. The positioning statement reflects everything you've learned up to that point about how your product, service, or brand can best reach your target segment. As a statement, it explains exactly how you plan to provide value to those target customers. In effect, it's a short, persuasive argument.

Typically, a positioning statement is one sentence that succinctly identifies the target market and spells out what you want them to think about your brand. This statement should include 1) the target segment, 2) the brand name, 3) the product/service category or frame of reference in which you are establishing this market position, 4) the key points of differentiation, and 5) the reasons customers should believe the positioning claims.

Crafting the Positioning Statement

The brand consultancy EquiBrand (n.d.) recommends the following straightforward formula for writing positioning statements:

To [*target audience*], Product X is the only [*category or frame of reference*] that [*points of differentiation/benefits delivered*] because [*reasons to believe*].

The parts of the formula supplied by you (the marketer) are as follows:

- The "target audience" is a brief description of the segment you're targeting with this positioning strategy. For example: *young urban males*, *managing partners in law firms*, or *small business owners in the Pacific Northwest.*
- "Product X" is your product, service, or brand name.
- The "category or frame of reference" is the category of products or services you're competing in. For instance: *spectator sporting events*, *virtual assistant services*, or *employer 401K benefit plans.*
- The "points of differentiation/benefits delivered" explains both what problem you solve and how you solve it in a different and better way than competitors. It highlights the competitive advantage(s) underpinning your positioning strategy. Be sure to explain not just what is different about you, but why customers care about that difference.
- The "reasons to believe" are any proof points or evidence that show your customers how you live up to your claims about how you are different and better.

Let's look at some examples of well-written positioning statements:

AMAZON (circa 2001, when it sold primarily books)

For World Wide Web users who enjoy books, Amazon is a retail bookseller that provides instant access to over 1.1 million books. Unlike traditional book retailers, Amazon provides a combination of extraordinary convenience, low prices and comprehensive selection. ("Figuring Out…," 2014).

This clearly worded positioning statement follows the formula closely, even though the "reasons to believe" are added as a second sentence. It presents the competitive advantage ("*instant access to over 1.1 million books*") as a clear differentiator, and with this wording we also understand the problem Amazon solves–convenient access to lots of books. The specific reasons to believe are highly desirable benefits for the target audience. Note that *World Wide Web* refers to the Internet.

MOTEL 6

To frugal people, Motel 6 is the alternative to staying with family and friends that provides a welcoming, comfortable night's rest at a reasonable price. (Kelley & Jugenheimer, 2015).

The Motel 6 example is a very concise positioning statement. It's interesting that the frame of reference is "staying with friends and family," rather than "motels" generally. This shows an astute understanding of the target customer's mindset and the recognition that the motel chain's leading competitor is *not* staying in a motel. The point of differentiation also reveals the problem Motel 6 solves: where to get a "welcoming, comfortable night's rest at a reasonable price." Its points of differentiation and reasons to believe blur together, but the statement provides well-focused direction for a marketing mix that targets "frugal people."

TIDE LAUNDRY DETERGENT

For cost-conscious moms of large blue-collar families with active children, Tide is the brand of laundry detergent that gets clothes their cleanest and keeps them looking new because "improved" Tide formulation powers out stains while keeping clothes from fading and fraying. (Kelley & Jugenheimer, 2015).

This third positioning statement identifies the target audience so specifically that it's easy to create a vivid mental picture of the customer. The problem Tide solves is very clear: getting clothes clean. This statement emphasizes the product's competitive advantage around cleaning power and superior formulation, while promising valued benefits that customers enjoy when they use this product. The onus here is on the brand to provide these concrete benefits around not "fading and fraying," but these are definite reasons to believe if indeed the product can deliver.

Evaluating Positioning Statements

How do you know when a positioning statement is going to be effective? Obviously, positioning statements should contain all the elements in the formula above, since that information is needed to translate the positioning strategy into a well-developed marketing mix. There are other criteria you should look for, as well. For example, the following:

- **Is it tailored to the target market?** Too often, positioning statements either leave out the target segment, or else the entire approach isn't really suited to that unique group. If a positioning statement would work just as well if you plugged in a completely different target segment, then you probably haven't thought deeply enough about your target's unique needs and what will make them want your product. Or, you've defined your target segment too narrowly, in which case you should revisit whom you're trying to reach.
- **Is it simple, focused, and memorable?** A positioning statement that is overly complex will be hard to execute against because it isn't focused enough to deliver a clear message to the customer. Make sure it is very clear what problem(s) you solve. Use easy-to-understand words instead of jargon that muddles the meaning. If your statement is running long, consider trimming a few differentiators or benefits. It's actually very good to prune down to the essentials so your meaning is crystal clear. Make every word count!
- **Does it provide an unmistakable picture of your product, service, or brand?** Your positioning statement should work beautifully for you, but not very well for your competitors. If you

can substitute any competitor's name for your own in the positioning statement—and it still sounds credible—then you need some additional work on your differentiators and competitive advantages. If you are going to own your market niche, it must be a place that no one else can easily occupy.
- **Can you deliver on the promise you make?** The positioning statement promises some benefits or outcomes to your customers. You must be able to consistently live up to this promise—otherwise you'll lose credibility, and your offering will stand for something that's untrustworthy. If you can't live up to your promise, you need to take another, more realistic look at the offering's benefits and the customers' reasons to believe.
- **Does it provide helpful direction for designing the marketing mix and other decisions?** From the positioning statement, you should have a sense of what types of activities and messages are consistent with that positioning and support the brand you are working to build.

By combining customer research and perceptual mapping, a marketer can also create a positioning statement using one of the three basic concepts discussed below.

The Three Basic Concepts for Positioning:

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=43#h5p-3

- Functional Positions: Functional positions deal with solving a problem, providing benefits, and getting a favourable perception from investors, stockholders, and consumers.
- Symbolic Positions: Symbolic positions deal with self-image enhancement, ego identification, belongingness, social meaningfulness, and affective fulfillment.
- Experiential Positions: Experiential positions deal with providing sensory or cognitive stimulation.

Repositioning

Positioning is a powerful tool, but when you position a product, service, or brand, the world doesn't stand still. Market conditions change. Your customers and competitors change. You change.

Positioning should be designed to last. But for most offerings, you'll eventually need to revisit your positioning strategy and consider whether to make adjustments. This process has a very logical name: **repositioning**. In some ways, repositioning is more challenging than initial positioning because you're building on prior established work, trying to strengthen what's working and fix what isn't—it's a bit like remodeling an old house instead of building one from scratch.

Just as the name implies, repositioning involves changing the identity of a product relative to competing products. Many famous companies have saved failing products by repositioning them in the market. When a company initiates a repositioning strategy, it needs to change the expectations of stakeholders, including employees, stockholders, and financial backers. An organization can reposition a product line, a brand, or an entire company. Determining which type of repositioning is needed isn't always easy; it is important to understand the changes in the current market and how competitors will react to the change. If a change is volatile and is unprecedented, there may not be enough information available to use to make a decision. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of a company can help determine when repositioning may be necessary and how the change should occur.

Brand Repositioning and the American Red Cross

Despite the risks, repositioning can be wildly successful when it is handled effectively. A good case in point is the American Red Cross. In 2009, the U.S. had sunk into the Great Recession, and the American Red Cross ("ARC") was also feeling the pain. With its budget relying heavily on charitable donations, and with Americans giving less due to the recession, the nonprofit organization faced a budget deficit going into the fourth quarter.

For many nonprofit organizations, the last quarter of the year is prime fundraising season, since people open their wallets for holiday giving. Up until 2009, this was not the case for the Red Cross. Americans gave generously to the organization during disasters, but the ARC wasn't people's top choice for holiday giving. Seeing an opportunity in this apparent disconnect, the ARC engaged a creative agency to help repositioning the organization in the minds of potential donors.

Research confirmed that the competitive advantage of the American Red Cross, in consumers' minds, was providing help in times of disaster. The organization's then-current positioning of "Change a Life, Starting with Your Own" shared a powerful emotional message, but it did not reinforce the competitive advantage or create a sense of urgency around giving to the ARC. The repositioning effort developed a new positioning direction expressed in the tag line "Give the gift that saves the day."

This message reinforced the powerful role that the Red Cross plays in times of disaster and invited Americans to be part of that important work. With words like "give the gift," it also implanted the idea of the ARC as a great recipient for holiday giving. The following video was created as part of the 2009 integrated marketing campaign that introduced this new positioning.

The repositioning was a resounding success. Income increased more than 5 percent compared to prior years. People who saw ads associated with the repositioning campaign were twice as likely to donate as people who didn't see them. The fourth quarter of 2009 was one of the strongest since 2000. Brand awareness increased by 6 percentage points. The benefits didn't stop in 2009, either. Building on their success, the ARC expanded the repositioning campaign in 2010. By the end of the year, income had increased 26 percent over 2009, and the average gift size increased 43 percent ("American Red Cross…," 2009).

These impressive results reveal the power of repositioning when it is handled well.

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SITUATIONAL FACTORS AND INFLUENCES

In additional to demographic and social influences, we also examine some of the situational factors that influence consumer decision making, such as the design and presentation of a retail environment. While many retailers seek to maximize sales and grow their customer base, “taking care” of the customer is something retailers are also becoming more focused on today. Creating comfortable, accessible, and pleasant retail environments that help customers achieve their shopping goals is a win-win for retailers and customers alike. And yes, the price-conscious consumer may be less concerned with the tidiness of a change room or the careful folding pattern of shirts, but nonetheless, it is still important for retailers to take care of their customers. Whether they are limited due to time (shopping on a lunch break) or patience (have you ever shopped with a toddler?), customers are influenced by nearly everything around them when they are immersed in the retail experience.

The science of consumer behavior describes and even defines how you shop and, more importantly, why you buy. Smart retailers study consumer behavior patterns and lay out their stores and merchandise accordingly. For example, did you know that 86 percent of women look at price tags when they shop, while only 72 percent of men do (Underhill, 1999)? And did you know that the average shopper doesn’t actually notice anything that’s in the entrance of a store?

Situational Influences on Consumer Decision Making

Shopping. It’s the national pastime for some but a detested necessity for others. Whether you love shopping (“Oh, that is sooooooo cute!”) or do everything to avoid it (“I’m not going to the mall, no matter what”), it is a major source of spending. But what makes you stop and pick up one sweater but not another? What makes you buy a pair of jeans you weren’t even looking for? What makes you walk out of the store spending more than you had planned?

Shopping experiences involve customers interacting with tangible and intangible aspects of a shopping environment. Some of the most significant influences on our decisions to buy are: atmospherics; *crowding; location; layout; time; and, mood.*

Atmospherics

The effects of store atmospherics on shopping behaviour have been explored since the 1960s (Turley & Millman, 2000). Kotler (1973) was the first to use and define the term **atmospherics**. He argues that consciously controlled and designed consumption space can influence the emotional state of the customers, which increase their likelihood of making purchases (Kotler, 1973). The set of controllable characteristics of environmental cues are “atmospherics”.

More recently, researchers have contextualized atmospheric cues such as *music, lighting, colour and crowding* in retail settings, and investigated how these various atmospheric variables contribute to shopping outcomes such as approach/avoidance, affective response, merchandise/retailer evaluations, shopping satisfaction, and intention to purchase (Plunkett, 2013).

Based on a review of empirical studies of atmospheric effects on shopping behaviour, Turley & Milliman (2000) created a comprehensive table that systematically categorizes the variables into five groups: external variables; general interior variables; layout and design variables; point of purchase (POP) and decoration variables; and, human variables. Please refer to the table below for more details.

Store Atmospherics Variables

Table that categorizes the five atmospheric variables that impact shopping outcomes

External Variables	General Interior Variables	Layout & Design Variables	POP & Decoration Variables	Human Variables
Exterior signage	Flooring & carpet	Space design & allocation	Point of purchase displays	Employee characteristics
Entrances	Colour scheme	Placement of merchandise	Signs & cards	Employee uniforms
Exterior display windows	Lighting	Grouping of merchandise	Wall decorations	Crowding
Heights of building	Music	Work station placement	Degrees & certificates	Customer characteristics
Size of building	Scents	Placement of equipment	Pictures	Privacy
Colour of building	Width of aisles	Placement of cash registers	Artwork	
Surrounding stores	Wall composition	Waiting areas	Product displays	
Laws & gardens	Paint & wallpaper	Waiting rooms	Usage instructions	
Address & location	Ceiling composition	Department locations	Price displays	
Architectural style	Merchandise	Traffic flow	Technology	
Surrounding area		Racks & cases		
Parking availability		Waiting queues		
Congestion & traffic		Furniture		
Exterior walls		Dead areas		

Among the five groups of variables, external variables are those mostly determined when a store location is selected and are most challenging to change after the store opens. However, there are still aspects that are within the control of a retailer, but oftentimes overlooked. For example, exterior signage, entrances and exterior display windows are all important elements that can make positive first impressions on shoppers and entice them to enter the store. These variables are integral to a retailer's brand image and should reflect a retailer's overall business strategy.

General interior variables are within the control of a retailer, but they are unlikely to be changed regularly unless a remodeling project is done. The lifespan of a remodel is driven by market competition, but generally speaking, many retailers have programs which call for a minor renovation every five years and a full remodel every ten years (Avis, 2012). Among the general interior variables, music, scents, temperature and cleanliness should be carefully controlled and monitored on a regular basis. Retailers have full control over layout and design variables and point-of-purchase (POP) and decoration variables, all of which directly contribute to customers' shopping experiences. Human variables should be included in retailers' operation strategies.

Atmospherics in a Variety of Contexts

Physical factors that firms can control, such as the layout of a store, music played at stores, the lighting, temperature, and even the smells you experience are called atmospherics. Perhaps you've visited the office of an apartment complex and noticed how great it looked and even smelled. It's no coincidence. The managers of the complex were trying to get you to stay for a while and have a look at their facilities. Research shows that "strategic fragrancing" results in customers staying in stores longer, buying more, and leaving with better impressions of the quality of stores' services and products. Mirrors near hotel elevators are another example. Hotel operators have found that when people are busy looking at themselves in the mirrors, they don't feel like they are waiting as long for their elevators (Moore, 2008).

Crowding

Crowding is another situational factor. Have you ever left a store and not purchased anything because it was just too crowded? Some studies have shown that consumers feel better about retailers who attempt to prevent overcrowding in their stores. However, other studies have shown that to a certain extent, crowding can have a positive impact on a person's buying experience. The phenomenon is often referred to as "herd behavior" (Gaumer & Leif, 2005).

Location

Retailers have traditionally provided consumers with access to their goods and services through retail stores. **Location** decisions are critical to the ultimate success of the retail enterprise.

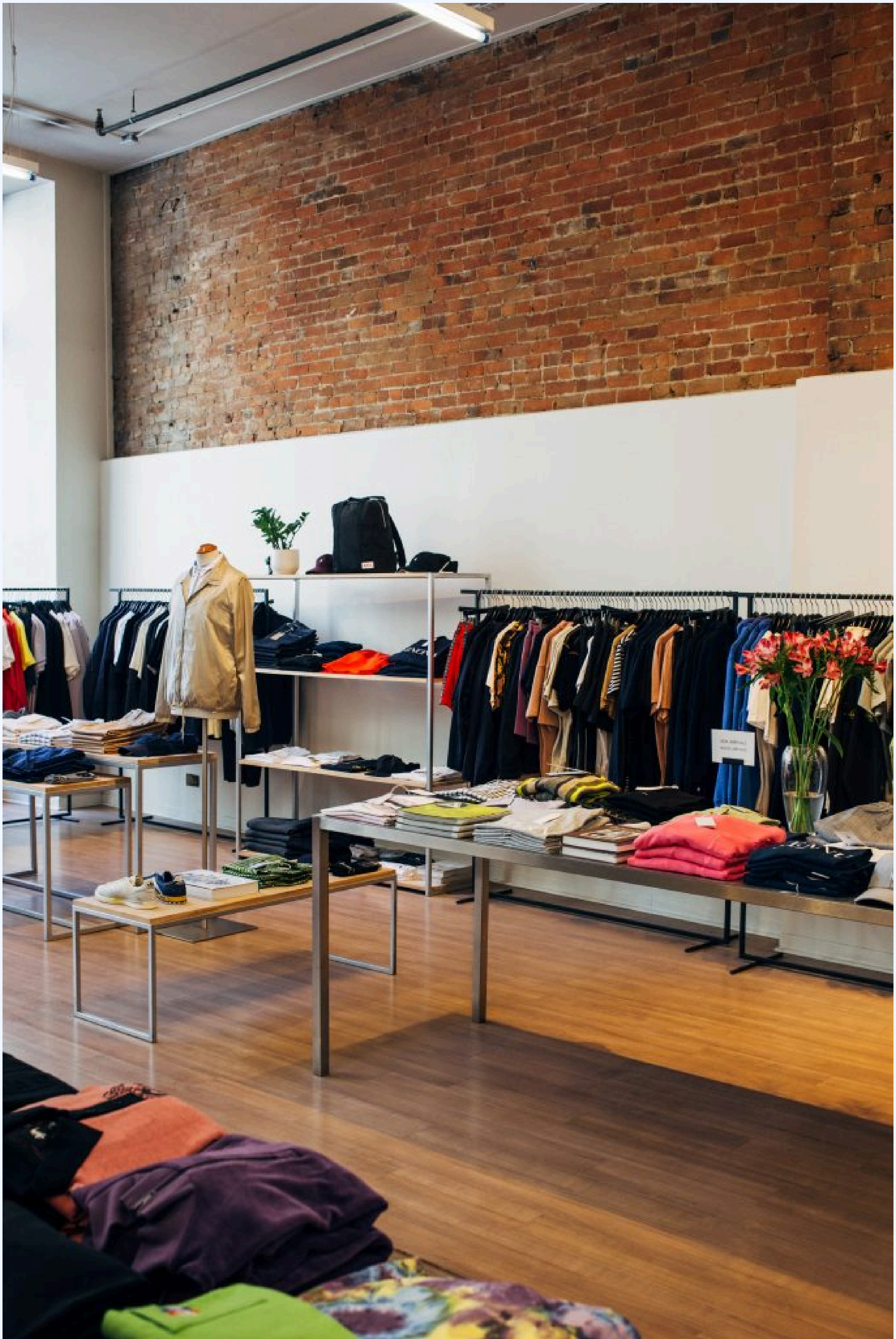
> Good locations allow ready access, attract large numbers of customers and increase the potential sales of retail outlets… even slight differences in location can have significant effects on market share and profitability (ghosh & McLafferty, 1987).

While many elements of retail and service strategy are dynamic and fast-changing, location decisions are by contrast traditionally long-term and binding. For example, it is relatively straightforward for a retailer or service provider to change pricing, product/service assortment or advertising. However, the physical "bricks-and-mortar" of store locations are a form of grounded capital that cannot be easily altered or quickly changed. As such, there is an underlying inertia to retail location decisions; once made, the organization usually must live with the decision for many years to come.

Winning the Location Game

Store locations also influence behavior. Starbucks has done a good job in terms of locating its stores. It has the process down to a science; you can scarcely drive a few miles down the road without passing a Starbucks. You can also buy cups of Starbucks coffee at many grocery stores and in airports—virtually any place where there is foot traffic.

Layout



The design and layout of a retail store should be done with care and consideration for the customer. Large aisles and easy-to-access items, for example, make shopping easier and benefit the retailer's bottom line as well.

Have you ever been in a department story and couldn't find your way out? No, you aren't necessarily directionally challenged. Marketing professionals take physical factors such as a store's design and **layout** into account when they are designing their facilities. Presumably, the longer you wander around a facility, the more you will spend. Grocery stores frequently place bread and milk products on the opposite ends of the stores because people often need both types of products. To buy both, they have to walk around an entire store, which of course, is loaded with other items they might see and purchase.

Think about the last time you went into a grocery store or drug store; you might not have noticed anything until you were well inside the store, which means that the merchandise and signs that were displayed in the area before you got your bearings were virtually invisible to you (Underhill, 1999). Based on consumer research, there's a high likelihood that you turned right when you entered the store. Take note the next time you go shopping; chances are, you'll turn right after you walk in (Underhill, 1999).

According to Paco Underhill, famous marketer, CEO and founder of EnviroSell, and author of the book, *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping*, consumers don't actually begin shopping until a certain point after they enter the store. That's why smart retailers include a "**transition zone**" at the entry to their store; it allows customers to get their bearings and choose their shopping paths. In other words, products, signs, and displays that are in the very front of the store might not be seen if there is not a transition for the customers when they enter. In the case of Abercrombie & Fitch, the transition is the space just inside the entrance that includes the humongous photo of an Abercrombie model. When you go into Hollister, it's the outside porch that serves the same purpose; it's a transition that allows you to get your focus and plot your course in the store, even if you don't consciously realize it.

Some retail environments have taken great care to design and support a comfortable and intuitive shopping experience for their customers: a smooth transition zone at the front of the store; a basket or bag located in the transition zone so customers can collect and hang on to their selections easily; wide aisles that allow for multi-directional traffic, but also wheelchairs and baby strollers; easy access to items that customers want to reach and examine closely in their hands; and, clean and tidy change rooms that make customers feel comfortable getting undressed in.

The Way We Shop

Come, let's go shopping together. Image you're walking into the mall and heading straight towards your favourite clothing store—Nike, Aritzia, Lululemon, Zara, The Gap. You enter the store, pause for a few moments to get the lay of the land, then pick up a shopping basket on your right (you're a serious shopper and have come to buy…spring is just around the corner, after all). You start moving through the right hand side of the store first, picking up a few items and adding them to your basket. You touch everything that catches your eye: feeling the denim to see if it's soft and stretchy; the shirts to see if they're cotton or linen; the dress to see if the fabric falls freely or is stiff and rigid. What you don't bother with are the clothes folded on the low shelf at the bottom of a table display: they're awkward to get to and you would have to bend down and set your basket aside just to pull one out. If you're on the petite side, you also don't bother with the items that are displayed up high (the sales staff are scarce and already helping other customers so you skip past that area).

You avoid the narrow aisles because getting past someone standing and looking through some shirts will bring you into close contact with them—no thanks! A few minutes later someone brushes past your backside just as you are reaching for some shorts and you come close to leaving the store!

Now you're making your way to the back of the store: the change rooms are here. You take a look to see how clean and/or crowded they are. Long line up? Forget it. No mirror in the room? Not a chance! You look to see if there's a chair or stool and some hooks to hang up your coat and bags. You will also decide on whether or not a different size is worth asking for if the staff are friendly and promise to make themselves available to you. After you try your items on, the cash can be found in the middle of the store. Purchase made, you exit the store and head to find some shoes to match your new spring clothes.

Research shows that customers shop in different types of stores with varying expectations for their shopping experiences. Based on empirical findings, Yoon (2013) reported that department store shoppers preferred affective experiences the most, whereas discount store and online shoppers preferred rational experiences. The author reasoned that department stores tend to draw customers with lifestyle products and pleasant store atmospherics, therefore, customers expect to derive a **hedonic shopping experience**, which involves pure enjoyment, excitement, captivation, escapism, and spontaneity beyond the purchase of product itself (Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994).

In contrast, customers shopping in discount stores and online usually are mostly value seekers who focus on price or functionality of products. Therefore, they expect utilitarian value when they shop. The customers may evaluate their shopping experience exclusively on the tangible attributes of goods and services acquired from their shopping trips (Holbrook, 1986), as well as on whether a purchase is made in a deliberate and efficient manner (Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994).

Store designs should aim to satisfy the types of shopping experience customers are looking for. Permanent stores, department stores, specialty stores and boutiques should strive to reflect more on customers' need for sensory and experiential shopping attributes, while discount stores, dollar stores, hypermarkets, outlet stores, warehouse stores and thrift stores need to highlight the value proposition that customers are seeking.

Time

The time of day, time of year, and how much time consumers feel like they have to shop affect what they buy. Researchers have even discovered whether someone is a "morning person" or "evening person" affects shopping patterns. Have you ever gone to the grocery store when you are hungry or after pay day when you have cash in your pocket? When you are hungry or have cash, you may purchase more than you would at other times.

Seven-Eleven Japan is a company that's extremely in tune to time and how it affects buyers. The company's point-of-sale systems at its checkout counters monitor what is selling well and when, and stores are restocked with those items immediately—sometimes via motorcycle deliveries that zip in and out of traffic along Japan's crowded streets. The goal is to get the products on the shelves when and where consumers want them. Seven-Eleven Japan also knows that, like Americans, its customers are "**time starved**." Shoppers can pay their utility bills, local taxes, and insurance or pension premiums at Seven-Eleven Japan stores, and even make photocopies (Bird, 2002).

Companies worldwide are aware of people's lack of time and are finding ways to accommodate them. Some doctors' offices offer drive-through shots for patients who are in a hurry and for elderly patients who find it difficult to get out of their cars. Tickets.com allows companies to sell tickets by sending them to customers' mobile phones when they call in. The phones' displays are then read by barcode scanners when the ticket purchasers arrive at the events they're attending. Likewise, if you need customer service from Amazon.com, there's no need to wait on the telephone. If you have an account with Amazon, you just click a button on the company's Web site and an Amazon representative calls you immediately.

Mood

Have you ever felt like going on a shopping spree? At other times wild horses couldn't drag you to a mall. People's **moods** temporarily affect their spending patterns. Some people enjoy shopping. It's entertaining for them. At the extreme are compulsive spenders who get a temporary "high" from spending.

A sour mood can spoil a consumer's desire to shop. The crash of the U.S. stock market in 2008 left many people feeling poorer, leading to a dramatic downturn in consumer spending. Penny pinching came into vogue, and conspicuous spending was out. Costco and Walmart experienced heightened sales of their low-cost Kirkland Signature and Great Value brands as consumers scrimped. Saks Fifth Avenue wasn't so lucky. Its annual release of spring fashions usually leads to a feeding frenzy among shoppers, but spring 2009 was different. "We've definitely seen a drop-off of this idea of shopping for entertainment," says Kimberly Grabel, Saks Fifth Avenue's senior vice president of marketing (Rosenbloom, 2009). To get buyers in the shopping mood, companies resorted to different measures. The upscale retailer Neiman Marcus began introducing more mid-priced brands. By studying customer's loyalty cards, the French hypermarket Carrefour hoped to find ways to get its customers to purchase nonfood items that have higher profit margins.

The glum mood wasn't bad for all businesses though. Discounters like Half-Priced books saw their sales surge. So did seed sellers as people began planting their own gardens. Finally, what about those products (Aqua Globes, Snuggies, and Ped Eggs) you see being hawked on television? Their sales were the best ever. Apparently, consumers too broke to go on vacation or shop at Saks were instead watching television and treating themselves to the products (Ward, 2009).

Consumption Choices During a Pandemic

What stories will future marketers tell of what it was like to be a consumer during the Coronavirus pandemic? How will they make sense of the fierce run on hand sanitizer and toilet paper in the early months of 2020? Will they tell stories about consumers hoarding food (despite grocery stores remaining open and never closing) and emptying the store shelves, leaving nothing but the odd odd can of green beans? What stories will we all tell in the future about our mood and mental state going into grocery stores only to find random food items available, scratching our heads at how we were going to turn them into meals for a week?

Since May 2020, I've asked my students to reflect on what it is like to be a consumer during a pandemic. They have shared their personal experiences with me which I've found both comforting and fascinating.

Most of us have agreed that when the pandemic started, luxury purchases went out the window! The focus of our purchases have been on meeting our needs and ensuring our safety: masks, soap, and technology for remote working and learning were the principle types of purchases. Many also purchased items to take place of not going to the gym: weights, new runners, and other exercise equipment. Some purchases shifted; for example, the money my husband and I would normally spend on clothes to wear to the office (him) and the university (me) was now spent on "comfy" clothes like sweatshirts and jogging pants. We've saved money on dry-cleaning, but spent more on heating our home over the winter since we're both working remotely.

We all had the same desire to make more purchases from home than to go to a store: most of us were buying items online that we'd never considered before, such as clothes, groceries, and household goods. Many of us found that online shopping not only kept us safe from exposure, but also helped make us feel less anxious: we could find what we needed and purchase it easier without having to go through the stress of lining up and possibly coming in contact with another infected person.

Perhaps one of the bigger challenges we've experienced as consumers is our inability to use our senses to help guide our consumer decision making: many students agreed that they missed being able to touch, smell, and see a product up close and in person and that buying online often felt like a "leap of faith". Paco Underhill studies consumer behaviour and helps retailers design more efficient, respectful, and comfortable shopping environments for their consumers: Underhill states that, "virtually all unplanned purchases—and many planned ones too—come as a result of the shopper seeing, touching, selling, or tasting something that promises pleasure, if not total fulfillment" (1999). If the pandemic has reduced, and in some cases eliminated, our ability to use our senses, does this help explain why we are feeling so much less fulfilled these days?

Without a doubt, the extreme changes in lifestyle brought on by the pandemic has forced all of us to consumer less frequently, more carefully, and in the absence of the environmental and situational factors that normally have an enormous influence over what we buy: we've had to reorient our consumption choices so they are more aligned with our needs and less with our wants. We've opted for availability over brand preference, not to be practical, but because we haven't had a choice in the matter! We have also prioritized our health—both physical and mental—which is a good thing for consumers now and forever.

Media Attributions

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CHAPTER REFLECTIONS

Continue Learning

1. Read this “Hub Spot” article, “The Little Known Stories Behind 8 Iconic Packaging Designs,” and make note of how our sensory receptors are being appealed to through these designs.
2. Read this “Explore Psychology” article, “Absolute Threshold: A Definition with Examples,” and come up with your own example for each of the senses presented.
3. Read this “CBC” article, “Think Before You Pink During Breast Cancer Awareness Month,” and explain how AmEx’s actions are consistent with the principles of Weber’s law.
4. Read this “Hub Spot” article, “What Is Guerilla Marketing: 7 Examples to Inspire Your Brand,” and discuss how and why brands are seeking salience with consumers.
5. Read this article by “The Independent,” “World’s Ugliest Colour Used on Cigarette Packets to Put Smokers Off,” and discuss the relationship between colours and our emotions.
6. Read this article, “What the Colour ‘Haint Blue’ Means to the Descendants of Enslaved Africans” and discuss the historical and cultural perspectives of indigo and its impact on the transatlantic trade.
7. Read this “Logo Design Love” blogpost, “Starbucks Logo Evolution,” and explain how the principle of differential threshold is applied.
8. What happens when brands redesign their logos and the consensus is…that they shouldn’t have? Read about the Gap’s 6-day logo change and discuss how this costly error relates to concepts around absolute threshold.
9. Watch the video, “Piano Stairs” produced by The Fun Theory.com for Volkswagen. Discuss how this is an example of “guerilla marketing.”

TOPIC 5. LEARNING THEORIES

Learning Objectives

In this section, we will discuss learning theories and how marketers use these theories to market their products and services, reach consumers, and develop **brand loyalty**.

Upon completing this section, students should:

1. Define behaviour learning and summarize the key learning strategies associated with it.
2. Define observational learning and summarize the key learning strategies associated with it.
3. Give examples of behavioural and observational learning taking place in marketing contexts.
4. Discuss the role of memory and nostalgia in the learning process and their application in marketing.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=48#h5p-4

- Associative learning: An aspect of behavioural learning theory involving the repetitive pairing of stimuli over time in order to form a strong connection (association) between two items.
- Behavioural learning theories: Learning theories that focus on how people respond to external events or stimuli.
- Classical conditioning (Pavlovian conditioning): A type of behavioural learning theory developed by Ivan Pavlov that explains how our responses (behaviour) to one situation can inform our response (behaviour) to a new situation.
- Cognitive biases: Described as errors in memory or judgement and often an inaccurate perception of something.
- Cognitive learning theories: Learning theories that focus on how people learn from mental processes and by observing others.
- Encoding: Describes the process of converting our experiences into memories.
- Family branding: A branding structure in which the brand focus is on the company name which appears on all the products (services) offered by that company. The association between products and corporate entity are strong and visible.
- Licensing: A branding strategy that involves the licensing of a brand name (to other companies) outside of its own product offering in order to bring more exposure to the brand.
- Long-term memory: The “LTM” is a system that enables us to store information for a longer period of time.
- Memory decay: The fading of memories over the passage of time.
- Modeling: Related to observational learning (cognitive learning theory), modeling involves imitating the behaviour of others.
- Nostalgia: An emotion that describes a longing for the past and often a romanticized version of what the past was actually like.
- Observational learning: Related to cognitive learning, this type of learning occurs when people observe the behaviour, responses, and actions of others.
- Operant/Instrumental conditioning: A type of behavioural learning theory that involves reinforcements.
- Positive/Negative reinforcement: Related to operant (instrumental) conditioning, positive reinforcement involves providing rewards to encourage a particular type of behaviour. Negative reinforcement involves removing something in order to encourage a particular type of behaviour or action.

- Product line extensions: A branding and product strategy that occurs when marketers add new products to an existing brand in order to capitalize on the positive and popular brand equity already established within the market place.
- Retrieval: The process of recalling or reactivating memories that have been stored away.
- Salience: Items that have salience are those that we deem attractive and worthy of our attention.
- Schemas: Also referred to as “mental categories” and patterns of knowledge, schemas provide meaning and structure to the information stored in our memories.
- Semantic meaning: A term used to describe symbolic associations between two objects.
- Sensory memory: Temporary storage of information that we receive from our senses (ears, nose, eyes, tongue, body).
- Short-term memory: Also known as “working memory,” the “STM” stores small “chunks” of information for only a limited amount of time and has a limited capacity.
- Sleeper effect: A situation in which over time, people develop a changed attitude towards an object, without knowing the original source of the information that might have triggered the start of the change.
- Social models: These are people who might be considered of higher status or authority compared to the person observing them.
- Source monitoring: A term used to describe the ability to accurately recall the source of a memory.
- Stimulus discrimination: The opposite of stimulus generalization, this concept explains how we respond different to stimuli that may be similar, but not identical.
- Stimulus generalization: A term used to describe when people respond to stimuli in a certain way because it reminds them of the original stimulus. In marketing, it is the strategy behind the creation of copy-cat and look-alike brands.

BEHAVIOURAL LEARNING THEORIES

Learning refers to the relatively permanent change in knowledge or behaviour that is the result of experience. Although you might think of learning in terms of what you need to do before an upcoming exam, the knowledge that you take away from your classes, or new skills that you acquire through practice, these changes represent only one component of learning. In fact, learning is a broad topic that is used to explain not only how we acquire new knowledge and behaviour but also how we acquire a wide variety of other psychological processes, including the development of both appropriate and inappropriate social behaviours, and even how a person may acquire a debilitating psychological disorder such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Learning is perhaps the most important human capacity. Learning allows us to create effective lives by being able to respond to changes. We learn to avoid touching hot stoves, to find our way home from school, and to remember which people have helped us in the past and which people have been unkind. Without the ability to learn from our experiences, our lives would be remarkably dangerous and inefficient.

Theories of learning range from those that focus on simple stimulus-response connections (*behavioural theories*) to perspectives that regard consumers as solvers of complex problems who learn abstract rules and concepts as they observe others (*cognitive theories*). Basic learning principles are at the heart of many advertising efforts.

Learning Through Experiences

Learning refers to the process by which consumers change their behaviour after they gain information or experience. It's the reason you don't buy a bad product twice. Learning doesn't just affect what you buy; it affects how you shop. People with limited experience about a product or brand generally seek out more information than people who have used a product before.

Companies try to get consumers to learn about their products in different ways. Car dealerships offer test drives. Pharmaceutical reps leave samples and brochures at doctor's offices. Other companies give consumers free samples. To promote its new line of coffees, McDonald's offered customers free samples to try. Have you ever eaten the food samples at Costco or in your favourite grocery store? While sampling is an expensive strategy, it gets consumers to try the product and many customers buy it, especially right after trying in the store.

Behavioural Learning Theories

Behavioural learning theories assume that learning takes place as the result of responses to *external events*. For example, if a song we remember fondly from high school gets repeatedly paired with a brand name, over time our warm memories about the tune will rub off onto the advertised product. Can you think of any advertisements that feature a favourite song from your teenage years?

According to this perspective, the feedback we receive as we go through life shapes our experiences. Similarly, we respond to brand names, scents, "jingles" (a short song used in advertisements), and other marketing stimuli because of the learned connections we form over time. People also learn that actions they take result in rewards and punishments; this feedback influences the way they will respond in similar situations in the future. Consumers who receive compliments on a product choice will be more likely to buy that brand again, but those who get food poisoning at a new restaurant are not likely to return to it in the future.

Classical Conditioning

Although Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) won a Nobel Prize for studying digestion, he is much more famous for something else: working with a dog, a bell, and a bowl of food. Many people are familiar with the classic study of "Pavlov's dog," but rarely do they understand the significance of its discovery. In his famous experiment, Pavlov rang a bell and then gave a dog some food. After repeating this pairing multiple times, the dog eventually treated the bell as a signal for food, and began salivating in anticipation of the treat.

In fact, Pavlov's work helps explain why some people get anxious just looking at a crowded bus, why the sound of a morning alarm is so hated, and even why we swear off certain foods we've only tried once. **Classical (or *Pavlovian*) conditioning** is one of the fundamental ways we learn about the world around us. But it is far more than just a theory of learning; it is also arguably a theory of identity. For, once you understand classical conditioning, you'll recognize that your favourite music, clothes, even political candidate, might all be a result of the same process that makes a dog drool at the sound of bell.

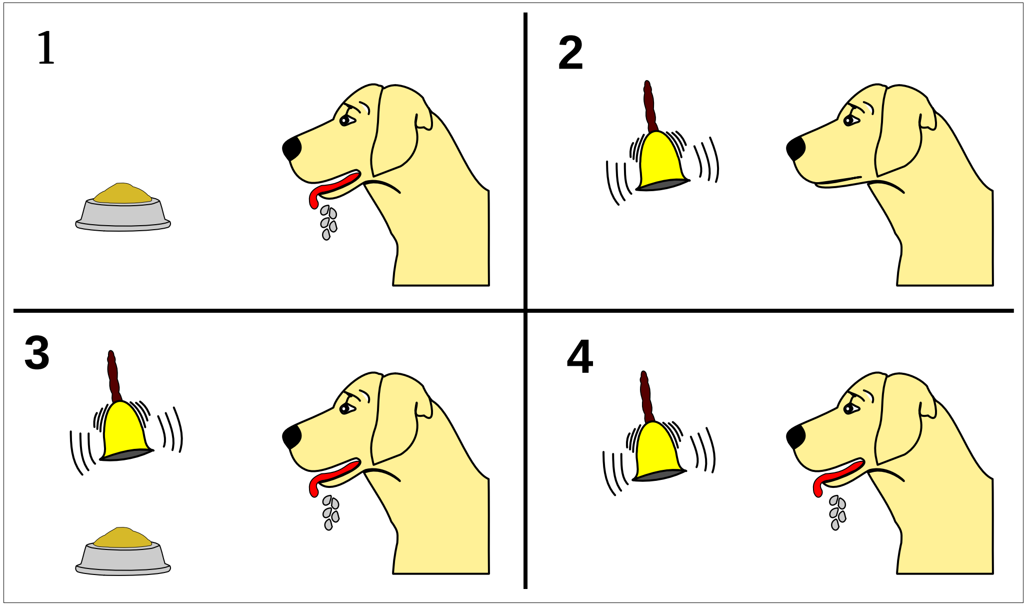

Image 1: the dog food and dog are featured (dog salivates). Image 2: The dog is introduced to a ringing bell (no response from dog). Image 3: The ringing bell is paired with the dog's food (dog salivates). Image 4: The dog becomes conditioned to salivate whenever it hears the ringing bell.

As illustrated in the image above, the dog food in Pavlov's experiment is called the *unconditioned stimulus* (US) because it elicits an *unconditioned response* (UR). That is, without any kind of "training" or "teaching," the stimulus produces a natural or instinctual reaction. In Pavlov's case, the food (US) automatically makes the dog drool (UR). Other examples of unconditioned stimuli include loud noises (US) that startle us (UR), or a hot shower (US) that produces pleasure (UR).

On the other hand, a *conditioned stimulus* (CS) produces a *conditioned response (CR)*. A conditioned stimulus is a signal that has no importance to the organism until it is paired with something that does have importance. For example, in Pavlov's experiment, the bell is the *conditioned stimulus*. Before the dog has learned to associate the bell (CS) with the presence of food (US), hearing the bell means nothing to the dog. However, after multiple pairings of the bell with the presentation of food, the dog starts to drool at the sound of the bell. This drooling in response to the bell is the conditioned response (CR). Although it can be confusing, the conditioned response is almost always the same as the unconditioned response. However, it is called the conditioned response because it is conditional on (or, depends on) being paired with the conditioned stimulus (e.g., the bell).

To help make this clearer, consider becoming really hungry when you see the logo for a fast food restaurant. There's a good chance you'll start salivating. Although it is the actual eating of the food (US) that normally produces the salivation (UR), simply seeing the restaurant's logo (CS) can trigger the same reaction (CR).

We now believe that this same learning process is engaged, for example, when humans associate a drug they've taken with the environment (or surroundings) in which they've taken it; when they associate a stimulus (e.g., a symbol for vacation, like a big beach towel) with an emotional event (like a burst of happiness); or when they associate the smell of a particular type of fast food with getting food poisoning.

Although classical conditioning may seem "old" or "too simple" a theory, it is still widely studied today as a type of **associative learning**, a form of learning that relies on the *repetitive pairing of stimuli*. Swedish car brand, "Volvo" has successfully paired its name with the concept of "safety" for years, giving consumers the sense that Volvos are among the safest cars on the road (and ideal for young families).

Classical Conditioning & the Consumer

Classical conditioning has long been, and continues to be, an effective tool in marketing and advertising (Hawkins, Best, & Coney, 1998). The general idea is to create an advertisement that has positive features such that the ad creates enjoyment in the person exposed to it. The enjoyable ad serves as the unconditioned stimulus (US), and the enjoyment is the unconditioned response (UR). Because the product being advertised is mentioned in the ad, it becomes associated with the US, and then becomes the conditioned stimulus (CS). In the end, if everything has gone well, seeing the product online or in the store will then create a positive response in the buyer, leading them to be more likely to purchase the product.

A similar strategy is used by corporations that sponsor teams or events. For instance, if people enjoy watching a university basketball team playing basketball, and if that team is sponsored by a product, such as Red Bull, then people may end up experiencing positive feelings when they view a can of Red Bull. Of course, the sponsor wants to sponsor only good teams and good athletes because these create more pleasurable responses.

Advertisers use a variety of techniques to create positive advertisements, including enjoyable music, cute babies, attractive models, and funny spokespeople. In one study, Gorn (1982) showed research participants pictures of different writing pens of different colours, but paired one of the pens with pleasant music and the other with unpleasant music. When given a choice as a free gift, more people chose the pen colour associated with the pleasant music. And Schemer, Matthes, Wirth, and Textor (2008) found that people were more interested in products that had been embedded in music videos of artists that they liked and less likely to be interested when the products were in videos featuring artists that they did not like.

Another type of ad that is based on principles of classical conditioning is one that associates fear with the use of a product or behaviour, such as those that show pictures of deadly automobile accidents to encourage seat belt use or images of lung cancer surgery on cigarette boxes to discourage smoking. These ads have also been found to be effective (Das, de Wit, & Stroebe, 2003; Perloff, 2003; Witte & Allen, 2000), due in large part to conditioning. When we see a cigarette and the fear of dying has been associated with it, we are hopefully less likely to light it up.

Taken together then, there is ample evidence of the utility of classical conditioning, using both positive as well as negative stimuli, in advertising. This does not, however, mean that we are always influenced by these ads. The likelihood of conditioning being successful is greater for products that we do not know much about, where the differences between products are relatively minor, and when we do not think too carefully about the choices (Schemer et al., 2008).

Check your learning! Try this H5P review on Classical Conditioning to make sure you are familiar with the terms of this learning theory.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=50#h5p-5

Stimulus Generalization

Pavlov also experimented with presenting new stimuli that were similar, but not identical, to the original conditioned stimulus. For instance, if the dog had been conditioned to being scratched before the food arrived, the stimulus would be changed to being rubbed rather than scratched. He found that the dogs also salivated upon experiencing the similar stimulus, a process known as (stimulus) generalization. **Stimulus generalization** refers to the tendency to respond to stimuli that resemble the original conditioned stimulus. The ability to *generalize* has important evolutionary significance. If we eat some red berries and they make us sick, it would be a good idea to think twice before we eat some purple berries. Although the berries are not exactly the same, they nevertheless are similar and may have the same negative properties.

Lewicki (1985) conducted research that demonstrated the influence of stimulus generalization and how quickly and easily it can happen. In his experiment, high school students first had a brief interaction with a female experimenter who had short hair and glasses. The study was set up so that the students had to ask the experimenter a question, and (according to random assignment) the experimenter responded either in a negative way or a neutral way toward the students. Then the students were told to go into a second room in which two experimenters were present and to approach either one of them. However, the researchers arranged it so that one of the two experimenters looked a lot like the original experimenter, while the other one did not (she had longer hair and no glasses). The students were significantly more likely to avoid the experimenter who looked like the earlier experimenter when that experimenter had been negative to them than when she had treated them more neutrally. The participants showed stimulus generalization such that the new, similar-looking experimenter created the same negative response in the participants as had the experimenter in the prior session.

The Copy Cat Brand Strategy

The reactions we learn to one object tend to transfer to other, similar objects in a process psychologists term stimulus generalization. That explains why a drugstore's bottle of private brand mouthwash deliberately packaged to resemble Listerine mouthwash may evoke a similar response among consumers, who assume that this copy-cat product shares other characteristics of the original. Indeed, consumers in one study on shampoo brands tended to rate those with similar packages as similar in quality and performance as well.

[1]Stimulus generalization is the basic idea underlying numerous branding strategies that share this approach: (1) Create a brand name that consumers learn to associate with positive qualities; (2) paste that brand name on other, reasonably similar products; (3) stand back and let the positive associations transfer to the new item.

This approach explains the success of these branding strategies:

- **Family branding**. Many products capitalize on the reputation of a company name. Companies such as Campbell's, Heinz, and General Electric rely on their positive corporate images to sell different product lines.
- **Product line extensions**. Marketers add related products to an established brand. Dole, which we associate with fruit, introduced refrigerated juices and juice bars, whereas Sun Maid went from raisins to raisin bread.
- **Licensing**. Companies often "rent" well-known names. Christian Dior licenses the designer's name to products from underwear to umbrellas.

Stimulus Discrimination

The flip side of stimulus generalization is **stimulus discrimination** — the tendency to respond differently to stimuli that are similar but not identical. Pavlov's dogs quickly learned, for example, to salivate when they heard the specific tone that had preceded food, but not upon hearing similar tones that had never been associated with food. Discrimination is also useful — if we do try the purple berries, and if they do not make us sick, we will be able to make the distinction in the future. And we can learn

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that although two people in our class, Courtney and Sarah, may look a lot alike, they are nevertheless different people with different personalities.

Operant (Instrumental) Conditioning

Although classical conditioning is a powerful explanation for how we learn many different things, there is a second form of conditioning that also helps explain how we learn. First studied by Edward Thorndike (1874-1949), and later extended by B. F. Skinner (1904-1990), this second type of conditioning is known as **operant (instrumental) conditioning**. Operant conditioning occurs when a *behaviour* (as opposed to a stimulus) is associated with the occurrence of a significant event. In the best-known example, a rat in a laboratory learns to press a lever in a cage (called a "Skinner box") to receive food. Because the rat has no "natural" association between pressing a lever and getting food, the rat has to learn this connection. At first, the rat may simply explore its cage, climbing on top of things, burrowing under things, in search of food. Eventually while poking around its cage, the rat accidentally presses the lever, and a food pellet drops in. This *voluntary behaviour* is called an operant behaviour, because it "operates" on the environment (i.e., it is an action that the animal itself makes)

Now, once the rat recognizes that it receives a piece of food every time it presses the lever, the behaviour of lever-pressing becomes *reinforced*. That is, the food pellets serve as reinforcers because they strengthen the rat's desire to engage with the environment in this particular manner. In a parallel example, imagine that you're playing a street-racing video game. As you drive through one city course multiple times, you try a number of different streets to get to the finish line. On one of these trials, you discover a shortcut that dramatically improves your overall time. You have learned this new path through operant (instrumental) conditioning. That is, by engaging with your environment (operant responses), you performed a sequence of behaviours that that was **positively reinforced** (i.e., you found the shortest distance to the finish line). And now that you've learned how to drive this course, you will perform that same sequence of driving behaviours (just as the rat presses on the lever) to receive your reward of a faster finish.

Operant conditioning research studies how the effects of a behaviour influence the probability that it will occur again. For example, the effects of the rat's lever-pressing behaviour (i.e., receiving a food pellet) influences the probability that it will keep pressing the lever. For, according to Thorndike's law of effect, when a behaviour has a positive (satisfying) effect or consequence, it is likely to be repeated in the future. However, when a behaviour has a **negative** (painful/annoying) consequence, it is less likely to be repeated in the future (**negative reinforcement**). Effects that increase behaviours are referred to as *reinforcers*, and effects that decrease them are referred to as *punishers*.

An everyday example that helps to illustrate operant conditioning is striving for a good grade in class—which could be considered a reward for students (i.e., it produces a positive emotional response).

In order to get that reward (similar to the rat learning to press the lever), the student needs to modify their behaviour. For example, the student may learn that speaking up in class gets them participation points (a reinforcer), so the student speaks up repeatedly. However, the student also learns that they shouldn't speak up about just anything; talking about topics unrelated to school actually punishes the students in their costs points (a form of *punishment*). Therefore, through the student's freely chosen behaviours, they learn which behaviours are reinforced and which are punished.

Understanding classical and operant conditioning provides psychologists with many tools for understanding learning and behaviour in the world outside the lab. This is in part because the two types of learning occur continuously throughout our lives. It has been said that "much like the laws of gravity, the laws of learning are always in effect" (Spreat & Spreat, 1982).

Creating Loyal Customers Through Instrumental Conditioning

Marketers have developed a number of sales and marketing techniques based on the principles of *instrumental conditioning* and specifically *positive reinforcement*. Each of these commonly known tactics encourages consumers to be loyal, frequent, and high-spending shoppers:

- Discounts
- Rebates
- Rewards Programs
- Frequency Marketing Programs
- Gifts & Giveaways

What about marketing techniques designed to avoid negative consequences? Well, most notably would be furniture companies and auto dealerships who launch "inventory blow-out" advertising campaigns encouraging shoppers to "avoid taxes" and other perceived penalties if they buy within a specific time period.

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COGNITIVE LEARNING THEORIES

In contrast to behavioural theories of learning, **cognitive learning theory** approaches stress the importance of *internal mental processes*. This perspective views people as problem solvers who actively use information from the world around them to master their environments. Supporters of this view also stress the role of creativity and insight during the learning process. One important aspect of a cognitive learning perspective is **observational learning**; this occurs when people change their own attitudes or behaviours simply by watching the actions of others—learning occurs as a result of *vicarious* rather than direct experience. This type of learning is a complex process; people store these observations in memory as they accumulate knowledge, perhaps using this information at a later point to guide their own behaviour. **Modeling** is the process of imitating the behaviour of others. You should have no trouble thinking of advertisements you've seen that encourage you to model an actor's behaviours at a later point in time.

Observational Learning

Children learn about the world around them by observing the behaviours of others. Over time they may eventually model these behaviours which inform their preferences, attitudes, and ultimately their decision making as consumers.

Not all forms of learning are accounted for entirely by classical and operant conditioning. Imagine a child walking up to a group of children playing a game on the playground. The game looks fun, but it is new and unfamiliar. Rather than joining the game immediately, the child opts to sit back and watch the other children play a round or two. Observing the others, the child takes note of the ways in which they behave while playing the game. By watching the behaviour of the other kids, the child can figure out the rules of the game and even some strategies for doing well at the game.

This is called observational learning. This form of learning requires the observation of other people's behaviours: it differs from the previously discussed learning theories (associative, classical, operant) because it doesn't involve reinforcements or repetition. Instead, observational learning takes on the form of modeling—as in modeling the behaviour of others (who are referred to as "social models") we've observed through media, for example.

Social models are typically of higher status or authority compared to the observer, examples of which include parents, teachers, and public health officers. In the example above, the children who already know how to play the game could be thought of as being authorities—and are therefore social models—even though they are the same age as the observer. By observing how the social models behave, an individual is able to learn how to act in a certain situation. Other examples of observational learning might include a child learning to place their napkin in their lap by watching their parents at the dinner table, or a customer learning where to find the washroom after observing where other customers have gone when leaving their tables.

Bandura theorizes that the observational learning process consists of four parts. The first is *attention*—as, quite simply, one must pay attention to what they are observing in order to learn. The second part is *retention*: to learn one must be able to retain the behaviour they are observing in memory. The third part of observational learning, *initiation*, acknowledges that the learner must be able to execute (or initiate) the learned behaviour. Lastly, the observer must possess the *motivation* to engage in observational learning.

Modeling

Modeling is the process of imitating the behaviour of others. This is a particularly common form of learning for young consumers, who often observe the behaviour of others (often individuals who they look up to or admire, such as an online influencer) and imitate their behaviour. Naturally, when speaking of young consumers, the negative effects of this learning model are clear: smoking, high-risk behaviour, violence, self-harm, etc. are behaviours that children are not only observing in others, but also learning how to copy and perform on their own. The responsibility of advertisers with regard to their influence and impact on children and young consumers has brought into question, what should be marketed to kids and what should not? Remember advertisements for smoking? No? I do—but that's because I grew up at a time when there was little consideration about the effects (role) models had on children. Often seen in smoking commercials and billboards, attractive and idealized adults modeled to a young audience the perceived joy and sophistication that came along with being a smoker. After years of scrutiny, activism, and eventually legislation, tobacco companies were no longer permitted to advertise their products to children and young consumers.

Student Op-Ed: Creating the "Pepsi Generation"

Throughout Pepsi's history, the cola company has often utilized the modeling theory of learning to convey a brand message to consumers. The Cola Conquest is a documentary film that follows the creation and growth of cola drinks throughout the United States, and eventually around the world. Coca-Cola's main competitor, Pepsi, has been the only alternative with a shared history in what marketing historians call, the "Cola Wars," proving that the cola brand has always been a worthy competitor to the sugary drink conglomerate (Angelico, 1998).

Since it's conception, Coke's marketing has represented quintessential American symbols and values of freedom and family, while often drawing on nostalgia and wholesome traditions to target middle to upper class American consumers of the dominant culture. To differentiate itself from Coke, Pepsi took an alternate direction, using, pop culture imagery and icons in its marketing to reach youth and street culture demographics (Angelico, 1998). The documentary features original Pepsi commercials starring Michael Jackson, who'd taken the world by storm with innovative creativity and catchy pop songs. Similarly, supermodel Cindy Crawford lent her star power to the youthful brand by acting as somewhat of a spokesperson (Webb, Angelico, & Neidik, 1998). This type of cognitive learning that we refer to as modeling demonstrates how celebrities and pop culture icons directly influence young (and youthful) consumers who learned to favour Pepsi over Coke (Dahl, White, & Solomon, 2015).

Modeling can play an important factor in a consumer's decision making process since it plays into our desires to imitate the behaviour of others. Modeling as a marketing strategy can be particularly effective when the models are individuals (or more appropriately, "influencers") who consumers admire. Marketers utilize the learning theory of modeling by featuring individuals which consumers aspire to be like or imitate into their advertising campaigns (Dahl, White, & Solomon, 2015). When Pepsi launched the infamous, "Pepsi Generation" marketing campaign, they used celebrities, models, and edgy pop culture icons of the time, to connect the brand with consumers who identified as part of youth street culture (Angelico, 1998). Modeling proved to be a successful strategy for this campaign because it spoke directly to children who are more easily influenced by celebrity star-power as well as their peers (Dahl, White, & Solomon, 2015).

These advertisement campaigns were proven highly successful since entertainment and celebrity status was growing drastically in the 1980's (Angelico, 1998). Michael Jackson was Pepsi's most successful celebrity model, inspiring subculture youth in the urban cities of the United States to model the pop icon's choice in cola drinks (Angelico, 1998). One individual shared with me that when Michael Jackson's first Pepsi commercial premiered, teens rushed home to record it and re-watched repeatedly it in admiration. (Angelico, 1998). Pepsi continues to apply this marketing strategy as seen in their infamous television commercial featuring model and reality star Kendall Jenner. The intention was to leverage Jenner's global popularity and influence on the youth market; however, the content and messaging of the ad was in poor taste and caused controversy by both appropriating and trivializing the Black Lives Matter activist movement that campaigns to bring awareness of and an end to systemic racism and violence towards black youth. Despite being pulled from the airways, Jenner's endorsement and association with Pepsi drew considerable attention towards the brand.

In response to Coca Cola's capitalization on traditional upper-class American culture, I believe that Pepsi appropriately targeted a more specific consumer market of urban street culture, by integrating highly admired pop culture icons. As Coca-Cola has successfully captured the attention of mainstream consumers, Pepsi successfully adapted its brand by claiming a brand position closely reflective of street and pop culture, thereby becoming know as the "Pepsi Generation". Its positioning strategy established both a title adopted by youth and a much needed image for the brand which youth desired to be a part of.

Media Attributions

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MEMORY AND RETRIEVAL

The most exciting advertisement is worthless if it doesn't make a reasonably lasting impact on the receiver. So, advertisers need to understand how our brains encode, or mentally program, the information we encounter that helps to determine how we will remember it (if we do at all). In general, we have a better chance of retaining incoming data we associate with other information already in memory. [1]

Types of Memory

Psychologists distinguish among three distinct types of memory systems, each of which plays a role in processing brand-related information:

1. **Sensory Memory** permits storage of the information we receive from our *senses*. This storage is very temporary; it lasts a couple of seconds at most. For example, when walking to work you pass by a French bistro cafe and you get a quick, aromatic whiff of espresso and fresh croissants. Although this sensation lasts only a few seconds, it is sufficient to allow you to consider whether you should investigate further. If you retain this information for further processing, it passes into short-term memory.
2. **Short-Term Memory** ("STM") also stores information for a limited period of time, and it has limited capacity. This is similar to *working memory in a computer*; it holds the information we are currently processing. Our memories can store verbal input *acoustically* (in terms of how it sounds) or *semantically* (in terms of what it means). We store it when we combine small pieces of data into larger *chunks*. A chunk is a configuration that is familiar to the person and that they can think about as a unit. For example, a brand name like Beats by Dre can be a chunk that summarizes a great deal of detailed information about the product.
3. **Long-Term Memory** ("LTM") is the system that allows us to retain information for a long period of time. Information passes from STM into LTM via the process of elaborative rehearsal. This means we actively think about the chunk's meaning and relate it to other information already in memory. Advertisers sometimes assist in the process when they devise catchy slogans or jingles that consumers repeat on their own and retain in their LTM. In her article, "26 Companies With Really Catchy Slogans & Brand Taglines," Lindsay Kolowich Cox explains that a great slogan is

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[1]

> memorable, includes a key benefit, differentiates the brand, and imparts positive feelings about the brand (Cox, n.d.).

How well can you recall brand names are their slogans? Explore some of the most popular global brands and their slogans below in this interactive piece of content.

Brands and Their Slogans:

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=56#h5p-6

Nike: "Just do it"

McDonalds: "I'm lovin' it"

VANS: "Off the wall"

Cineplex Theatres: "See the big screen"

Disneyland: "Happiest place on earth"

Maybelline: "Maybe she's born with it…maybe it's Maybelline"

Rice Krispies: "Snap, crackle, pop! Rice Krispies"

Skittles: "Taste the rainbow"

Red Bull: "Red Bull gives you wings"

Ikea: "Swedish for common sense"

Encoding

Encoding is the process by which we place the things that we experience into memory. Unless information is encoded, it cannot be remembered. I'm sure you've been to a party where you've been introduced to someone and then — maybe only seconds later — you realize that you do not remember the person's name. Of course it's not really surprising that you can't remember the name, because you probably were distracted and you never encoded the name to begin with. At a very basic level, memory encoding is like hitting "Save" on a computer file. Once a file is saved, it can be retrieved as long as the hard drive is undamaged.

Retrieval

Even when information has been adequately encoded and stored ("saved"), it does not do us any good if we cannot retrieve it. **Retrieval** refers to the process of reactivating information that has been stored in memory. We are more likely to be able to retrieve items from memory when conditions at retrieval are similar to the conditions under which we encoded them. Context-dependent learning refers to an increase in retrieval when the external situation in which information is learned matches the situation in which it is remembered. (Fun fact: my colleague swears that playing the same music while studying something learned in class will help with retention!)

Storing Memories

It's important to understand how we store all of the massive amounts of information we retain in our minds. Just like a really disorganized "filing cabinet from hell," our memories about brands (not to mention everything else we know) are useless if we don't know where to find them. Advertisers can structure their communication to make it more likely that subsequent messages will call up the knowledge of a brand we've already retained.

Memories that are stored in long-term memory (LTM) are not actually isolated from one another; they are linked together into categories— networks of associated memories that have features in common with each other. Forming categories, and using categories to guide behaviour, is a fundamental part of human nature. Mental categories are sometimes referred to as **schemas** — patterns of knowledge in LTM that help us organize information. We have schemas about objects (that a triangle has three sides and may take on different angles), about people (that Sam is friendly, likes to golf, and always wears sandals), about events (the particular steps involved in ordering a meal at a restaurant), and about social groups (we call these *group schemas stereotypes*). Schemas are important in part because they help us remember new information by providing an organizational structure for it.

Ad Schemas & Consumers

Since the advertising landscape is a noisy and cluttered one, most consumers are not interested in paying attention to every single marketing message or advertisement they come in contact with (Ferris, 2004). Advertising schemas, therefore, allow consumers to sort and filter through the messages more efficiently: these structures and patterns of knowledge provide short-cuts in evaluating an ad we see on TV, online, or in a magazine within seconds. Ad schemas explain why we "skip" some commercials and focus on others.

Ferris (2004) states that, "[s]chemas develop when exposure to a knowledge structure is repeated and consistent," which is generally what advertisements are, communications we are exposed to both *consistently* and *repeatedly*. Goodstein (1993) argues that while several different types of ad schemas likely exist, consumers will often create schemas that are structured around product classes (e.g., alcohol, cars, insurance, and toys). Most product and service categories advertise in similar ways (I'm looking at you, *realtors*) which means their advertisements are shown "frequently and employ similar semantic, physical, and structural features" (Stoltman, 1991) enabling consumers to activate their schema (they know if they're going to want to see the ad or not based on its similarity to other brands' ads).

Advertising schemas, therefore, show us how generalization is being applied and helping us to organize, store, and act on information in a short period of time.

Accessing Memories

Not surprisingly, recall is enhanced when we pay more attention to the message in the first place. Some evidence indicates that we can retrieve information about a *pioneering brand* (the first brand to enter a market) more easily from memory than we can for *follower brands*, because the first product's introduction is likely to be distinctive and, for the time being, has no competitors to divert our attention (Kardes, Kalyanaram, Chandrashekaran & Dornoff, 1992). In addition, we are more likely to recall descriptive brand names than those that do not provide adequate cues as to what the product is (Zaichkowsky & Vipat, 1992).

Of course, the nature of the ad itself also plays a big role in determining whether we'll remember it. We're far more likely to remember spectacular magazine ads, including multi-page spreads, three-dimensional pop-ups, scented ads, and ads with audio components (Sass, 2007).

Here are some other factors advertisers need to remember:

- **State-dependent retrieval**. We are better able to access information if our internal state (for example, our mood at the time) is the same at the time of recall as when we learned the information. If, for example, we recreate the cues that were present when the information was first presented, we can enhance recall. That's why Life cereal uses a picture of "Mikey" from its commercial on the cereal box, which facilitates recall of brand claims and favorable brand evaluations (Keller, 1987).
- **Familiarity**. Familiarity enhances recall. Indeed, this is one of the basic goals of marketers who try to create and maintain awareness of their products. However, this sword can cut both ways: Extreme familiarity can result in inferior learning and recall. When consumers are highly familiar with a brand or an advertisement, they may pay less attention to the message because they do not believe that any additional effort will yield a gain in knowledge (Johnson & Russo, 1981; Lynch & Srull, 1982).
- **Salience**. The salience of a brand refers to its prominence or level of activation in memory. As we have already noted, stimuli that stand out in contrast to their environments are more likely to command attention which, in turn, increases the likelihood that we will recall them. This explains why unusual advertising (think Red Bull) or distinctive packaging (Tiffany's) tends to facilitate brand recall (Alba & Chattopadhyay, 1986; Hirschman & Solomon, 1984).
- **Novelty**. Introducing a surprise element in an ad can be particularly effective in aiding recall, even if it is not relevant to the factual information the ad presents (Heckler & Childers, 1992). In addition, *mystery ads*, in which the ad doesn't identify the brand until the end, are more effective at building associations in memory between the product category and that brand—especially in the case of relatively unknown brands (Fazio, Herr, & Powell, 1992).
- **Pictorial versus verbal cues**. Is a picture worth a thousand words? Indeed, we are more likely to recognize information presented in picture form at a later time (Childers & Houston, 1984; Childers, Heckler, & Houston, 1986). Certainly, visual aspects of an ad are more likely to grab a consumer's attention. In fact, eye-movement studies indicate that about 90 per cent of viewers look at the dominant picture in an ad before they bother to view the copy (Krober-Riel, 1984). But, while ads with vivid images may enhance recall, they do not necessarily improve comprehension. One study found that television news items presented with illustrations (still pictures) as a backdrop

result in improved recall for details of the news story, even though understanding of the story's content did not improve (Brosius, 1989).[2]

2.

Creating Memories Through Story, Symbolism, & Semantics

The encoding process is influenced by the type of meaning we experience from a stimulus. Sometimes we process a stimulus simply in terms of its sensory meaning, such as the literal color or shape of a package. We may experience a feeling of familiarity when, for example, we see an ad for a new snack food we have recently tasted. In many cases, though, we encode meanings at a more abstract level. **Semantic meaning** refers to symbolic associations, such as the idea that minimalists avoid plastic bags or that athletes drink Gatorade.

Advertisers often communicate these kinds of meanings through a narrative, or story. For example, in 2006 New York-based creative agency SS+K developed television spots for the New York Knicks basketball team that featured some of the biggest Knicks fans, including film director Spike Lee, talking about the current state of the team, as well as lifelong Knicks fans who share fond memories of past glories. Starting in 2014, Procter & Gamble began airing commercials entitled, “Thank you mom”—an ad campaign featuring a heartfelt narrative about mom’s supporting their future Olympians starting at a young age.

Much of the social information we acquire gets represented in memory in story form, so constructing ads in the form of a narrative can be a very effective technique to connect with consumers. Narratives persuade people to construct mental representations of the information they view. Pictures aid in this construction and allow for a more developed and detailed mental representation (Escalas, 2004; Adaval & Wyer, 1998)[3]

Semantic advertising, on the other hand, applies semantic analysis techniques to web pages. The process is meant to accurately interpret and classify the meaning and/or main subject of the page and then populate it with targeted advertising spots. By closely linking content to advertising, it is assumed that the viewer will be more likely to show an interest (i.e., through engagement) in the advertised product or service.

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[3] .

Previous to the Coronavirus, public mask-wearing in most western cultures was rarely ever seen. Since the pandemic, mask-wearing is mandatory in most public spaces around the world. From fashion statement to political statement, masks have many layers of meaning for different people.

Finally, perhaps there is no better symbol that represents the times, struggles, and stories of what living through the Coronavirus pandemic has been like, than the face mask. From journalists to cultural psychologists, many have published articles on how the symbol of the mask has evolved to carry different layers of meaning. In most western cultures, mask wearing in public was rare, to say the least. Since the pandemic, mask-wearing has proven to be life saving, prompting even the biggest critic to reevaluate the science and shift from prioritizing one's own health to the health of the collective. And while some people still see the mask as an invasive detractor of their personal rights and freedoms, many others have adopted it as a symbol of respect, care, and a new reality.

Nostalgia

Perhaps one of the best ways marketers connect with consumers is through the use of **nostalgia**. Merriam-Webster (n.d.) defines nostalgia as, "a wistful or excessively sentimental yearning for return to or of some past period or irrecoverable condition." For some, nostalgia conjures up both happy and sad emotions and takes us back to a time that often felt simpler and less complicated.

In 2013, Microsoft released a television ad called, "Child of the 90's" that struck an emotional chord with many members of Generation Y. The ad featured Pogs, Trolls, Hungry-Hungry Hippos, Tamagotchis, bowl-style haircuts, and the Oregon Trail PC game. (I used to play this ad in my class and always enjoyed the giggles, long sighs, and quiet, smiling head nods of my students.) Unsurprisingly, nostalgia has great appeal to consumers in revitalizing distant memories and warm sentiments of the past: taking Polaroid pictures; making mixed tapes for a friend; and checking pay phones for forgotten quarters (note: the author is aware that she is dating herself, rather severely, with these references).

Student Op-Ed: The Art of Bittersweet Advertising

What began as a brain tonic in a small pharmaceutical shop, has now become a multinational soda company widely regarded as the most recognizable brand in the world. Coca-Cola, now approaching its 128th year of business, has seen a lot of change over the years, most notably during "The Cola Wars" (Angelico, The Cola Conquest Episode 01—The Big Sell, 1998). Coca-Cola's ability to successfully use nostalgia and salience tactics, help them differentiate themselves from other cola brands (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015). Salience refers to the level of activation or prominence something may have in memory, whereas "the term Nostalgia is described as a bittersweet emotion in which the past is viewed with both sadness and longing" (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015). This presents an opportunity for companies to draw on those feelings to stand out.

For many years, Coca-Cola was instructed to avoid directly targeting children with their advertisement. No product wants to be perceived as the root cause of health issues in the younger generation. In 1984 when Pepsi aired their hit commercial, with a cast full of very youthful looking children featuring Michael Jackson, they showed little regard for what Coca-Cola had been trying to avoid all this time. Coke had already taken a big hit before the advertisement, and then had to quickly figure out a way to bounce back. "Coca-Cola's response was a middle-aged version of its most successful advertisement ever, 'Hilltop, I'd like to buy the world a Coke (1971)'. It may not have been as cool as Michael Jackson but, it sold" (Angelico, 1998). By using a memory marker, such as the 1971 advertisement, Coke understood that the ad would appeal to consumers because of the emotional effects associated with nostalgia (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015). Consumers who grew up on Coke were eager to relive all those feelings alongside their own families (Angelico, 1998) (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015).

After hastily changing the Coca-Cola formula and receiving immense backlash, they released "Coke Classic" using the original formula only three months later (Angelico, The Cola Conquest Episode 02—Cola War And Peace, 1998). Although the original Coke formula was only gone for a few months, the return triggered an effect similar to that of a retro band. There happens to be a large niche of consumers who prefer nostalgic brands and according to research, that feeling is boiled down to the need for "belongingness" (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015). The return of the formula brought all of Coca-Cola's history with it creating a path for new consumers to follow. Working hand in hand with nostalgia is salience (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015). Coca- Cola happens to have a very high salience due to its distinctive red packaging that has remained the same over the years. This is known as the Von Restorff effect. Because the packaging endured for over 128 years, this prompts consumers not only in brand recall, but it also creates a sense of nostalgia with regards to anything they may have done with Coca-Cola in their lives. A prominent colour such as red, their brand image, causes consumers' visual memory to think of Coca-Cola throughout the day (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015).

I believe that Coca-Cola has utilized nostalgia and salience in a way that no other brand has ever been able to do. It is the most efficient and powerful method to attract consumers, old or new. Solomon, White and Dahl explained that an indirect effect of memory markers is that retro happened to be very cool with younger audiences who were going through self-identification periods and were looking to differentiate themselves from others (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015). All it took was a little competition for Coca-Cola to demonstrate the power of memories in the world of advertisement. With the help of memory markers, retro band, and the Von Restorff effect, salience and nostalgia tactics truly did help Coke stand-alone from the competition (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015).

Media Attributions

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MEMORY FAILURE AND COGNITIVE BIASES

As we have seen, our memories are not perfect. They fail in part due to our inadequate encoding and storage, and in part due to our inability to accurately retrieve stored information. But memory is also influenced by the setting in which it occurs, by the events that occur to us after we have experienced an event, and by the cognitive processes that we use to help us remember. Although our cognition allows us to attend to, rehearse, and organize information, cognition may also lead to distortions and errors in our judgments and our behaviours.

Memory Decay

Why do we forget? Some memories simply fade with the passage of time; they **decay** as the structural changes learning produces in the brain simply go away. But most forgetting is due to interference; as we learn additional information, it displaces the earlier information. Because we store pieces of information in associative networks, we are more likely to retrieve a meaning concept when it's connected by a larger number of links. As we integrate new concepts, a stimulus is no longer as effective to retrieve the old response. These interference effects help to explain why we have trouble remembering brand information. Since we tend to organize attribute information by brand, when we learn additional attribute information about the brand or about similar brands, this limits our ability to activate the older information (Meyers-Levy, 1989).

The Cost of Failing to be Memorable

Marketers obviously hope that consumers will not forget about their products. However, in a poll of more than 13,000 adults, more than half were unable to remember any specific ad they had seen, heard, or read in the past thirty days (Burke & Srull, 1988).

How many can you remember right now? Quick, make a list! Clearly, forgetting by consumers is a big headache for marketers.

Cognitive Bias

Cognitive biases are errors in memory or judgment that are caused by the inappropriate use of cognitive processes. The study of cognitive biases is important both because it relates to the important psychological theme of accuracy versus inaccuracy in perception, and because being aware of the types of errors that we may make can help us avoid them and therefore improve our decision-making skills.

Identifying Cognitive Biases

Our perceptions about value and loss are formed by our experiences, culture, upbringing, and messages received through mass media. These are innate biases we learn over time, mostly unconsciously. These unconscious decisions distort our judgment and can lead to stereotyping and bad decision making.

There are numerous cognitive biases that impact our decisions: here are 10 to watch out for:

- **Anchoring Bias** – Over-relying on the first piece of information obtained and using this as a baseline for comparisons.
- **Availability Bias** – Making decisions based on immediate information or examples that come to mind.
- **Bandwagon Effect** – Making a decision if there are others that also hold that belief or opinion. People tend to divide themselves into groups, and then attribute positive attributes to their own group. *(Similar to "group think"* and "*herd mentality*".)
- **Choice-Supportive Bias** – Once a decision is made, focusing on the benefits and ignoring or minimizing flaws.
- **Confirmation Bias** – Paying more attention to information that reinforces previously held beliefs and ignoring evidence to the contrary.
- **False-Consensus Effect** – Overestimating how much other people agree with their own beliefs, behaviors, attitudes, and values. Leads people not only to incorrectly think that everyone else agrees with them, but it can also lead to overvaluing of opinions.
- **Halo Effect** – Tendency for an initial impression of a person to influence what we think of them overall. Assuming that because someone is good or bad at one thing they will be equally good or bad at another.
- **Self-Serving Bias** – Tendency for people tend to give themselves credit for successes but lay the blame for failures on outside causes. This plays a role in protecting your self-esteem.
- **Hindsight Bias** – Tendency to see events, even random ones, as more predictable than they are. (*Similar to the the "I knew it all along" phenomenon.)*
- **Misinformation Effect** – Tendency for memories to be heavily influenced by things that happened after the actual event itself. These memories may be incorrect or misremembered.

Perhaps one of the most relatable cognitive biases is the *IKEA Effect*, which is described as the disproportionately high value we place on items that we have had a hand in creating ourselves. This cognitive bias is more commonly expressed as a "a labour of love" showing our affinity for the blood, sweat, and tears that we put into building a bookshelf; sewing a quilt; assembly a large-scale LEGO project; or simply preparing a delicious dinner from a meal-delivery service. Not only do consumers value the end product more (than if they'd purchased one pre-assembled), they are even willing to pay more to put in the work!

Specifically, consumers exhibit greater willingness to pay for self-made products than for identical products that have been produced by someone else, even if the self-crafted product is of inferior quality (e.g., Franke et al. 2010; Norton et al. 2012). Since effort is considered costly, preferring self-made products over ready-made products incurs extra costs, which should intuitively lower the willingness to pay. Remarkably, the higher willingness to pay as demonstrated by the literature suggests the opposite and points to an overvaluation of the self-made product. For example, in an experimental study, Norton et al. (2012) asked participants to assemble a standardized IKEA storage box or hedonistic items such as a Lego car or an origami model. Regardless of the product type, the participants exhibited greater willingness to pay compared with the willingness to pay of third-parties and also compared with their own willingness to pay for identical but pre-assembled products.

Source Monitoring

One potential error in memory involves mistakes in differentiating the sources of information. **Source monitoring** refers to the ability to accurately identify the source of a memory. Perhaps you've had the experience of wondering whether you really experienced an event or only dreamed or imagined it. If so, you wouldn't be alone. Rassin, Merkelbach, and Spaan (2001) reported that up to 25 per cent of undergraduate students reported being confused about real versus dreamed events. Studies suggest that people who are fantasy-prone are more likely to experience source monitoring errors (Winograd, Peluso, & Glover, 1998), and such errors also occur more often for both children and the elderly than for adolescents and younger adults (Jacoby & Rhodes, 2006).

The Sleeper Effect

In other cases we may be sure that we remembered the information from real life but be uncertain about exactly where we heard it. Imagine for a moment that you have just read some gossip online. Probably you would have discounted the information because you know that its source is unreliable. But what if later you were to remember the story but forgot the source of the information? If this happens, you might become convinced that the news story is true because you forget to discount it. The **sleeper effect** refers to attitude change that occurs over time when we forget the source of information (Pratkanis, Greenwald, Leippe, & Baumgardner, 1988).

In still other cases we may forget where we learned information and mistakenly assume that we created the memory ourselves. Canadian authors Wayson Choy, Sky Lee, and Paul Yee launched a $6 million copyright infringement lawsuit against the parent company of Penguin Group Canada, claiming that the novel *Gold Mountain Blues* contained "substantial elements" of certain works by the plaintiffs ("Authors Sue Gold Mountain...," 2011). The suit was filed against Pearson Canada Inc., author Ling Zhang, and the novel's U.K.-based translator Nicky Harman. Zhang claimed that the book shared a few general plot similarities with the other works but that those similarities reflect common events and experiences in the Chinese immigrant community. She argued that the novel was "the result of years of research and several field trips to China and Western Canada," and that she had not read the other works. Nothing was proven in court.

Finally, the musician George Harrison claimed that he was unaware that the melody of his song *My Sweet Lord* was almost identical to an earlier song by another composer. The judge in the copyright suit that followed ruled that Harrison did not intentionally commit the plagiarism. (*Please use this knowledge to become extra vigilant about source attributions in your written work, not to try to excuse yourself if you are accused of plagiarism.*)

The Sleeper Effect, Cognitive Bias, & MSG

I can remember back to some time in my youth when there was a public fear of a flavour-enhancing ingredient commonly used in Asian cooking. Monosodim glutamate (better known as "MSG"), was the target of widespread criticism and public outcry because someone somewhere claimed it caused adverse side effects, ranging from headaches to numbness. Thinking back now I wonder where I first heard this? Who was responsible for this claim and was the source reliable? I was young and easily influenced by herd mentality (*bandwagon effect*) and never bothered to ask. I do remember, however, that every Asian restaurant I went to marketed themselves as being "MSG-free" even to the extent that they would advertise a large image of "MSG" in a circle with a line across it, like a no-smoking sign.

Today I'm intrigued to know how this all happened: how did consumers all over the world develop a negative and unfavourable attitude towards MSG, and presumably like me, have no idea the source or validity of the panic in the first place?

Where it all started

MSG, a flavour-enriching substance used in frozen and packaged food items as well as in freshly cooked meals was falsely blamed to cause adverse side effects, but suspiciously only in Asian food and not western food items.

In 1968, MSG's death knell rang in the form of a letter written to the *New England Journal of Medicine* by Dr. Robert Ho Man Kwok, a Chinese-American doctor from Maryland. Kwok (1968) claimed that after eating at Chinese restaurants, he often came down with certain unpleasant symptoms, namely "numbness at the back

> of the neck, gradually radiating to both arms and the back" and "general weakness and palpitation."(Geiling, 2013)

After Kwok's letter was published, the New England Journal of Medicine received many more from readers who claimed to experience similar effects after eating Chinese food.

Debunking the MSG myth

Countless scientific and medical experiments were conducted in the two decades following Kwok's 1968 claim—from the FDA to the United Nations—and extensive examinations completed by many governments (Australia, Britain, Japan) which concluded that MSG was safe to use and consume as a food additive (Geiling, 2013). The U.S. Food & Drug Administration ("FDA") states the following on its website about MSG:

> FDA considers the addition of MSG to foods to be "generally recognized as safe" (GRAS). Although many people identify themselves as sensitive to MSG, in studies with such individuals given MSG or a placebo, scientists have not been able to consistently trigger reactions ("Questions & Answers"…2018).

This leads me to wonder, what was really behind all this panic about MSG?

Confronting consumer bias

Ian Mosby, a food historian who has researched what became known as the "Chinese restaurant syndrome" examined the topic more closely in his research publication, "That Won-Ton Soup Headache': The Chinese Restaurant Syndrome, MSG and the Making of American Food, 1968-1980". Mosby (2009) argued that the Chinese restaurant syndrome was, "at its core, a product of racialized discourse that framed much of the scientific, medical and popular discussion surrounding the condition." For example, Mosby points out that while Asian restaurants in the western world had to advertise loudly "No MSG," junk food and packaged good companies selling potato chips and cans of soup didn't (Mosby, 2012). As it turns out, MSG is not unique to just Asian cuisine and is used in a host of other packaged and frozen products as well as freshly prepared non-Asian dishes.

Bias and prejudice towards Asian people and cuisine fueled an unnecessary marketing movement and the anti-MSG activism in many parts of the world, including in Canada were it is often believed that racism has no home. Mosby reminds us of why that isn't the case:

> The story of the 'discovery' and 'spread' of the Chinese restaurant syndrome – and its central idea that you were more likely to suffer an adverse reaction to MSG after eating Chinese food – therefore provides an instructive example of the ways in which ideas about supposedly 'foreign' food and food cultures can often bring to the surface a range of prejudices and assumptions grounded in ideas about race and ethnicity that, even in supposedly pluralistic and multicultural societies like Canada, continue to inform perceptions of the culinary 'other'.

Schema & Confirmation Bias

Schemas help us remember information by organizing material into coherent representations. However, although schemas can improve our memories, they may also lead to cognitive biases. Using schemas may lead us to falsely remember things that never happened to us and to distort or misremember things that did. For one, schemas lead to confirmation bias, which is *the tendency to verify and confirm our existing memories rather than to challenge and disconfirm them*. The confirmation bias occurs because once we have schemas, they influence how we seek out and interpret new information. The confirmation bias leads us to remember information that fits our schemas better than we remember information that disconfirms them (Stangor & McMillan, 1992), a process that makes our stereotypes very difficult to change. And we ask questions in ways that confirm our schemas (Trope & Thompson, 1997). If we think that a person is an extrovert, we might ask her about ways that she likes to have fun, thereby making it more likely that we will confirm our beliefs. In short, once we begin to believe in something — for instance, a stereotype about a group of people — it becomes very difficult to later convince us that these beliefs are not true; the beliefs become self-confirming.

Darley & Gross (1983) demonstrated how schemas about social class could influence memory. In their research they gave participants a picture and some information about a Grade 4 girl named Hannah. To activate a schema about her social class, Hannah was pictured sitting in front of a nice suburban house for one-half of the participants and pictured in front of an impoverished house in an urban area for the other half. Then the participants watched a video that showed Hannah taking an intelligence test. As the test went on, Hannah got some of the questions right and some of them wrong, but the number of correct and incorrect answers was the same in both conditions. Then the participants were asked to remember how many questions Hannah got right and wrong.

Demonstrating that stereotypes had influenced memory, the participants who thought that Hannah had come from an upper-class background remembered that she had gotten more correct answers than those who thought she was from a lower-class background.

Schemas & Pro-Environmental Consumers

How have consumers' existing expectations about brands and retailers shaped their decision making? What actions can brands undertake to influence how consumers evaluate them? Consider the fashion and apparel industries and today's highly-involved and conscientious consumer.

Many consumers today are becoming increasingly vocal about pro-environmental issues, making it imperative for retailers to be transparent about how their products are made ("Fashion with a conscience," 2017). Bhaduri (2019) tells us that several apparel brands have started to not only undertake "pro-environmental" initiatives, but also communicate their effort through marketing communications because research shows that consumers often evaluate brands and their communications based on their existing expectations (*schemas*). Research also suggests that brand messages that are congruent (aligned) to consumers' schemas will reinforce their existing expectations and be evaluated positively. A winning outcome for the brand!

Salience & Cognitive Accessibility

Another potential for bias in memory occurs because we are more likely to attend to, and thus make use of and remember, some information more than other information. For one, we tend to attend to and remember things that are highly **salient**, meaning that they attract our attention.

Does Salience Fool Us?

Things that are *unique, colourful, bright, moving, and unexpected* are more salient (McArthur & Post, 1977; Taylor & Fiske, 1978). In one relevant study, Loftus, Loftus, and Messo (1987) showed people images of a customer walking up to a bank teller and pulling out either a pistol or a chequebook. By tracking eye movements, the researchers determined that people were more likely to look at the gun than at the chequebook, and that this reduced their ability to accurately identify the criminal in a lineup that was given later.

The salience of the gun drew people's attention away from the face of the criminal.

In a consumer behaviour context, we see that a consumer's attention is attracted to and influenced by the most salient features they are faced with in the moment of buying (Bordalo, Gennaioli, & Shleifer, 2013). When deciding between two items—gym memberships, for example—the consumer might feel location is the most salient feature upon which they make their decision. Imagine if a consumer was considering purchasing a gym membership from one of two gyms. Gym A is close enough to the consumer's home that they could walk to it. The price, however, is 25% higher than Gym B, which is only a 10 minute drive away. Despite the price difference and the money that could be saved, our consumer selects the more expensive gym nearby because they are more attracted to "location"; in fact, their attraction to this feature is in-proportional to price, which means that location has more salience to our (soon to be fit) consumer.

The salience of the stimuli in our social worlds has a big influence on our judgment, and in some cases may lead us to behave in ways that might not benefit us. Imagine, for instance, that you wanted to buy a new mobile device for yourself. You checked *Consumer Reports* online and found that, although most of the leading devices differed on many dimensions, including price, battery life, weight, camera size, and so forth, one particular device was nevertheless rated significantly higher by owners than others. As a result, you decide that that is the one you are going to purchase the next day…

That night, however, you go to a party, and a friend shows you their brand new mobile device and after checking it out, you decide it's perfect for your needs. You tell your friend that you were thinking of buying the *other* brand and they convince you not to, saying it didn't download music correctly, the battery died right after the warranty expired, and so forth — and that *they* would never buy one. Would you still plan to buy it, or would you switch your plans?

If you think about this question logically, the information that you just got from your friend isn't really all that important. You now know the opinion of one more person, but that can't change the overall rating of the two devices very much. On the other hand, the information your friend gives you, and the chance to use their device, are highly salient. The information is right there in front of you, in your hand, whereas the statistical information from *Consumer Reports* is only in the form of a table that you saw on your computer. The outcome in cases such as this is that people frequently ignore the *less salient* (more important) information, such as the likelihood that events occur across a large population (these statistics are known as *base rates*), in favour of the less important but nevertheless *more salient* information.

People also vary in the schemas that they find important to use when judging others and when thinking about themselves. Cognitive accessibility refers to *the extent to which knowledge is activated in memory, and thus likely to be used in cognition and behaviour*. For instance, you probably know a person who is a golf nut (or fanatic of another sport). All they can talk about is golf. For them, we would say that golf is a highly accessible construct. Because they love golf, it is important to their self-concept, they set many of their goals in terms of the sport, and they tend to think about things and people in terms of it ("if they play golf, they must be a good person!"). Other people have highly accessible schemas about environmental issues, eating healthy food, or drinking really good coffee. When schemas are highly accessible, we are likely to use them to make judgments of ourselves and others, and this overuse may inappropriately colour our judgments.

Media Attributions

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CHAPTER REFLECTIONS

Continue Learning

1. As an example of Classical Conditioning, explore the repeated pairing of Royale toilet paper and its imagery of fluffy white kittens. Describe how this learning theory is being used and how it may impact a consumer.
2. Pick a well-known or popular consumer product that has a copy-cat brand (e.g. cereal, soft drinks, shampoo, pasta) available next or near it at a store. Take a photo of the products and discuss how stimulus generalization supports the strategy behind copy-cat branding.
3. Many well-established health and beauty product lines have grown through product-line extensions. Find an example of product-line extension and describe how this relates to behavioural learning.
4. Which brands use celebrity endorsement as a means to "model" behaviour for a youth target audience? Share and discuss your example using the concepts from the section on cognitive learning.
5. Using Google and/or YouTube, identify as many celebrities as possible who have acted as endorsers for skincare product company ProActive. Who is this company targeting? What learning theory underpins the use of celebrity endorsers? Is this effective in your opinion—why or why not?
6. There are many examples of how marketers use modelling as a way to both position and teach an audience about a brand. For example, skin care company Proactive has used many well-known celebrities as spokespeople to represent their skin care line. Discuss why modelling is an effective learning strategy in marketing using examples such as this commercial where Justin Bieber endorses Proactive.
7. Provide examples of brands who have used "nostalgia" as a means to reach an audience and provide a longing for the past. Why is nostalgia used and is it an effective marketing tool? For inspiration, watch this video from Microsoft and discuss why it may make you feel nostalgic.
8. Watch Dan Ariely's Ted Talk, "Are we in control of our own decisions?" and discuss the different ways confirmation biases influence our decision making as consumers.
9. Read Peter Yang's article, "How to Use Cognitive Biases For More Effective Marketing" and discuss the pro's, con's, and ethics of using confirmation biases as a marketing strategy to influence consumer decision making.

TOPIC 6. CONSUMER MOTIVATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Learning Objectives

In this section, we will learn about **motivation** and how marketers apply techniques to increase **consumer involvement**, meet consumers needs & wants, and use motivational techniques to develop consumer marketing strategies.

Upon completing this section, students should:

1. Define motivation and describe various types of needs and goals.
2. Summarize how marketers can use motivational concepts to develop marketing strategies.
3. Explain and identify the key differences between different involvement levels.
4. Discuss methods marketers may use to increase consumer involvement.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=63#h5p-7

- Cognitive dissonance (post-purchase dissonance): Also known as "consumer remorse" or "consumer guilt," this is an unsettling feeling consumers may experience post-purchase if they feel their actions are not aligned with their needs.
- Consumer involvement: A consumer's involvement level reflects how personally important or interested they are in purchasing/consuming an item.
- Customization: A marketing strategy used to increase involvement and engagement levels with consumers, customization involves the personalization of products for large groups of homogenous (similar) consumers.
- Drives/Drive theory: Drives represent the "tension" we feel when our body is out of balance, for example, due to hunger. Hunger is therefore a "drive state": drives represent physiological characteristics, or, things that we feel, and are motivated to resolve because they are essential to our survival.
- Expectancy theory: This theory works very differently from Drive theory because it explains our motivations when desirable outcomes are achieved through our own effort and performance.
- Extrinsic motivation: The tendency to take action and pursue a goal (motivation) because the outcome and achievement itself will be beneficial.
- Goals: A goal represents how we would like things to turn out, also known as a desired end state.
- Hedonic needs: Needs that are considered luxurious and highly desirable.
- Hemostasis: A term used to describe a natural (and harmonious) state of our body's systems. Homeostasis is achieved when a need or goal is satisfied (e.g. when we're hungry we eat; when we're tired we sleep).
- High involvement: High involvement decision making typically reflects when a consumer who has a high degree of interest and attachment to an item. These items may be relatively expensive, pose a high risk to the consumer (can't be exchanged or refunded easily or at all), and require some degree of research or comparison shopping.
- Impulse buying: A type of purchase that is made with no previous planning or thought.
- Intrinsic motivation: The tendency to take action and pursue a goal (motivation) because the process itself will be beneficial and fulfilling.
- Limited problem solving: Consumers engage in limited problem solving when they have some information about an item, but continue to gather more information to inform their purchasing decision. This falls between "low" and "high" involvement on the involvement continuum.
- Low involvement: Low involvement decision making typically reflects when a consumer who has a

low level of interest and attachment to an item. These items may be relatively inexpensive, pose low risk (can be exchanged, returned, or replaced easily), and not require research or comparison shopping.

- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: Abraham Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" (1943) is a motivational theory that places 5 needs in a hierarchical structure. It begins with basic (physiological) needs; safety needs; social needs; ego needs; and ends with self-actualization needs. Maslow's theory was based on the belief that lower-level needs should be attended to before upper-level needs could be.
- Motivation: The psychological energy, or driving force, that pushes us to pursue our goal(s).
- Motivational conflicts: In a marketing context, these different types of conflicts exist when consumers are faced with making a choice between purchasing decisions that bring on different outcomes — positive and/or negative. The three motivational conflicts are approach-approach; approach-avoidance; and, avoidance-avoidance.
- Needs: A basic deficiency (lacking of) an essential item, such as food, water, and shelter.
- Personalization (individualization): A marketing strategy used to increase involvement and engagement levels with consumers, personalization involves tailoring a product (or service) to meet the unique needs & wants of a specific consumer.
- Prevention orientation: A self-regulatory orientation we use emphasizes goals as things we should be doing as well as things we should be avoiding. This orientation focuses on safety, responsibility, and security needs as well as avoiding problems, dangers, and potential threats.
- Promotion orientation: A self-regulatory orientation we use emphasizes goals as things we are hopeful about as well as things that bring accomplishment and advancement to our needs. This orientation focuses on things that we want to do that will bring us pleasure and positive outcomes.
- Routine response behaviour: This concept describes when consumers make low-involvement decisions that are "automatic" in nature and reflect a limited amount of information the consumer has gathered in the past.
- Utilitarian needs: Needs that are considered practical and useful.
- Wants: Identifying specific and personal criteria on a need and how it should be fulfilled.

NEEDS, WANTS, AND GOALS

Every New Year, many of us make resolutions — or goals — that eventually go unsatisfied: eat healthier; pay better attention in class; volunteer, exercise more. As much as we know our lives would improve if we actually achieved these goals, people quite often don't follow through. But what if that didn't have to be the case? What if every time we made a goal, we actually accomplished it? Each day, our behaviour is the result of countless goals — maybe not goals in the way we think of them, like lifting the heaviest weights or being the first person to land on Mars. But even with "mundane" goals, like getting food from the grocery store, or showing up to work on time, we are often enacting the same psychological processes involved with achieving loftier dreams. To understand how we can better attain our goals, let's begin with defining what a goal is and what underlies it, psychologically.

Goals

A **goal** is the cognitive representation of a desired state, or, in other words, our mental idea of how we'd like things to turn out (Fishbach & Ferguson 2007; Kruglanski, 1996). This desired *end state* of a goal can be clearly defined (e.g., stepping on the surface of Mars), or it can be more abstract and represent a state that is never fully completed (e.g., eating healthy). Underlying all of these goals, though, is **motivation**, or the psychological driving force that enables action in the pursuit of that goal (Lewin, 1935).

Motivation can stem from two places. First, it can come from the benefits associated with the process of pursuing a goal (**intrinsic motivation**). For example, you might be driven by the desire to have a fulfilling experience while working on your Mars mission. Second, motivation can also come from the benefits associated with achieving a goal (**extrinsic motivation**), such as the fame and fortune that come with being the first person on Mars (Deci & Ryan, 1985). One easy way to consider intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is through your eyes as a student. Does the student work hard on assignments because the act of learning is pleasing (*intrinsic motivation*)? Or does the student work hard to get good grades, which will help land a good job (*extrinsic motivation*)?

Needs & Wants

Consumer behaviour can be thought of as the combination of efforts and results related to the consumer's need to solve problems. Consumer problem solving is triggered by the identification of some unmet **need**. A family consumes all of the milk in the house; or the tires on the family car wear out; or the bowling team is planning an end-of-the-season picnic: these present consumers with a problem which must be solved. Problems can be viewed in terms of two types of needs: physical (such as a need for food) or psychological (for example, the need to be accepted by others).

Although the difference is a subtle one, there is some benefit in distinguishing between needs and wants. A need is a basic deficiency given a particular essential item. You need food, water, air, security, and so forth. A **want** is placing certain personal criteria as to how that need must be fulfilled. Therefore, when we are hungry, we often have a specific food item in mind. Consequently, a teenager will lament to a frustrated parent that there is nothing to eat, while standing in front of a full refrigerator.

Most of marketing is in the want-fulfilling business, not the need- fulfilling business. Apple does not want you to buy just any watch, they *want you to want to buy* an Apple Watch. Likewise, Ralph Lauren *wants you to want* Polo when you shop for clothes. On the other hand, a nonprofit such as the Canadian Cancer Association would like you to feel a need for a check-up and does not care which doctor you go to. In the end, however, marketing is mostly interested in creating and satisfying wants.

Utilitarian & Hedonic Needs

Often discussion around needs are further explained in the context of those which are **utilitarian** (*practical and useful in nature*) and **hedonic** (*luxurious or desirable in nature*). Consumers satisfying their utilitarian needs will be more price sensitive than consumers seeking to satisfy hedonic needs who will justify high(er) prices due to the infrequency in which they would purchase a luxury item. **Cognitive dissonance**, or consumer guilt, is more likely to be associated with hedonic purchases than utilitarian ones.

Distinguishing Features Between Utilitarian Needs and Hedonic Needs

Table that lists sample items for utilitarian/hedonic needs

Utilitarian Needs	**Hedonic Needs**
Goods consumer for practical and useful purposes	Goods consumer for luxury purposes.
Daily use objects	Highly desireable objects
Items purchased routinely	Items purchased infrequently or on rare and special occasions
Consumers seek to meet basic and most pressing needs	Consumers seek to feel pleasure, fun, enjoyment, thrill, and/or excitement
Grocery items, gas	Spa treatments, jewellery

Prevention & Promotion Orientation

Research also distinguishes between two distinct self-regulatory orientations (or perceptions of effectiveness) in pursuing a goal: prevention and promotion.

A **prevention** emphasizes safety, responsibility, and security needs, and views goals as “oughts.” That is, for those who are prevention-oriented, a goal is viewed as something they *should* be doing, and they tend to focus on avoiding potential problems (e.g., exercising to avoid health threats). This self-regulatory focus leads to a vigilant strategy aimed at avoiding losses (the presence of negatives) and approaching non-losses (the absence of negatives).

On the other hand, a **promotion** focus views goals as “ideals,” and emphasizes hopes, accomplishments, and advancement needs. Here, people view their goals as something they *want* to do that will bring them added pleasure (e.g., exercising because being healthy allows them to do more activities). This type of orientation leads to the adoption of an eager strategy concerned with approaching gains (the presence of positives) and avoiding non-gains (the absence of positives).

To compare these two strategies, consider the goal of saving money. Prevention-focused people will save money because they believe it’s what they should be doing (an ought), and because they’re concerned about not having any money (avoiding a harm). Promotion-focused people, on the other hand, will save money because they want to have extra funds (a desire) so they can do new and fun activities (attaining an advancement). Although these two strategies result in very similar behaviours, emphasizing potential losses will motivate individuals with a prevention focus, whereas emphasizing potential gains will motivate individuals with a promotion focus. And these orientations — responding better to either a prevention or promotion focus — differ across individuals (chronic regulatory focus) and situations (momentary regulatory focus; Higgins, 1997).

Brands Applying Prevention or Promotion Orientations

Marketing Professional Farah Khan, says every marketer needs to understand that different consumers can respond differently to the same marketing strategy (Khan, 2015). How? The difference lies in how we perceive goals in relation to our personal values and believes (Khan, 2015). Prevention Orientation—or as Khan calls it, "Play to not lose" seeks ways to stay safe and secure; while Promotion Orientation—or "Play to win"—is all about risk and advancement.

Prevention Orientation: Avoiding Negative Outcomes

Marketers tailor their messages to consumers in order to appeal to their unique approaches to achieving goals. For example, consumers who are largely motivated to avoid harm/losses, act responsibly, and minimize damage, may be drawn to brands such as the ones below, which use persuasive messaging to highlight the avoidance of negative outcomes:

- The Body Shop & LUSH Cosmetics (*cruelty-free)*.
- Patagonia (*avoids excessive waste and environmentally harmful production practices*).
- Thrift clothing stores, such as The Goodwill (*sustainability; up-cycling*).
- Vape accessories (*reduced-risk smoking experience*).

Promotion Orientation: Seeking Rewards and Positive Outcomes

On the other hand, consumers with a promotion-focused goal orientation seek to maximize gain, benefit, and reward. Brands that appeal to these consumers may include:

- Axe Body Spray (*enhance attractiveness*).
- Birchbox (*personalized delivery of beauty products*).
- Dove (*promotes high self-esteem*).
- Music festivals and concerts (*memory-making experiences*).

Motivational Conflicts

Motivational conflict (or ambivalence) arises when people experience two goals that are incompatible with each other (Baker, Dickson, & Field, 2014). Consumers often find themselves in a state of conflict when two or more competing goals conflict with each other.

The three main types of motivational conflicts are:

1. **Approach-Approach:** conflict occurs when a person must choose between two desirable choices (Solomon, 2017). If the goal is to take a vacation, you might be stuck between two really good options: a beach holiday or an alpine ski trip.
2. **Approach-Avoidance:** conflict occurs when a person desires something, but also seeks to avoid it at the same time. This type of conflict carries both positive and negative outcomes for the consumer, such as eating delicious (yet unhealthy) junk food.
3. **Avoidance-Avoidance:** conflict occurs when a person is faced to choose between two equally undesirable choices, both of which carry negative outcomes. Spending a sunny summer weekend studying for an exam or getting a failing grade on that exam are both very unpleasant outcomes!

Text Attributions

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MOTIVATIONAL THEORIES AND MODELS

Motivations are often considered in psychology in terms of *drives*, which are internal states that are activated when the physiological characteristics of the body are out of balance, and *goals*, which are desired end states that we strive to attain. Motivation can thus be conceptualized as a series of behavioural responses that lead us to attempt to reduce drives and to attain goals by comparing our current state with a desired end state (Lawrence, Carver, & Scheier, 2002).

Drive Theory

What is the longest you've ever gone without eating? A couple of hours? An entire day? How did it feel? Humans rely critically on food for nutrition and energy, and the absence of food can create drastic changes, not only in physical appearance, but in thoughts and behaviours. If you've ever fasted for a day, you probably noticed how hunger (a form of "tension," or "hangry" as we call it in my house) can take over your mind, directing your attention to foods you could be eating (a cheesy slice of pizza, or perhaps some cold ice cream), and motivating you to obtain and consume these foods. It's not until you've eaten that your hunger begins to face and the tension you have experienced disappears.

Hunger is a **drive state**, an *affective* experience (something you feel, like the sensation of being tired or hungry) that motivates organisms to fulfill goals that are generally beneficial to their survival and reproduction. Like other drive states, such as thirst or sexual arousal, hunger has a profound impact on the functioning of the mind. It affects psychological processes, such as *perception, attention, emotion,* and *motivation*, and influences the behaviours that these processes generate.

How Food Advertising Engages Consumers

How do marketers capitalize on the tension that exists when we are hungry or thirsty? Have you ever seen an ad for a juicy steak when you're feeling hungry? Or ice cream when it's warm outside and you've just eaten dinner? Marketers both enhance our drive state (the tension we feel when we have an unmet goal or desire) through commercials and other forms of advertisements, as well as solve it by making products readily available through wide and prolific distribution systems. Thirsty? No problem, walk about 10 metres and you're bound to find a Coke somewhere.

Food advertising both engages our senses and enhances our drive state (think: food courts at shopping malls, sample stations at Costco, Ikea's restaurants, and farmers' markets in the summertime) and only the savvy of marketer who exasperates the tension is also there with product ready at hand.

Homeostasis

Like a thermostat on an air conditioner, the body tries to maintain **homeostasis**, the natural state of the body's systems, with goals, drives, and arousal in balance. When a drive or goal is aroused — for instance, when we are hungry — the thermostat turns on and we start to behave in a way that attempts to reduce the drive or meet the goal (in this case to seek food). As the body works toward the desired end state, the thermostat continues to check whether or not the end state has been reached. Eventually, the need or goal is satisfied (we eat), and the relevant behaviours are turned off. The body's thermostat continues to check for homeostasis and is always ready to react to future needs.

Many homeostatic mechanisms, such as blood circulation and immune responses, are automatic and non-conscious. Others, however, involve deliberate action. Most drive states motivate action to restore homeostasis using both "*punishments*" and "*rewards*." Imagine that these homeostatic mechanisms are like molecular parents. When you behave poorly by departing from the set point (such as not eating or being somewhere too cold), they raise their voice at you. You experience this as the bad feelings, or "punishments," of hunger, thirst, or feeling too cold or too hot. However, when you behave well (such as eating nutritious foods when hungry), these homeostatic parents reward you with the pleasure that comes from any activity that moves the system back toward the set point.

Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory explains motivations much differently than drive theory. While drive theory explains why we are motivated to eat, drink, and sleep (to reduce tensions arising to unmet needs—hunger, thirst, tiredness), expectancy theory explains motivations where desirable outcomes can be achieved through our effort and performance.

According to **expectancy theory**, individual motivation to put forth more or less effort is determined by a rational calculation in which individuals evaluate their situation (Porter & Lawler, 1968; Vroom, 1964). According to this theory, individuals ask themselves three questions:

1. Whether the person believes that high levels of effort will lead to outcomes of interest, such as performance or success. This perception is labeled ***expectancy***. For example, do you believe that the effort you put forth in a class is related to performing well in that class? If you do, you are more likely to put forth effort.
2. The degree to which the person believes that performance is related to subsequent outcomes, such as rewards. This perception is labeled ***instrumentality***. For example, do you believe that getting a good grade in the class is related to rewards such as getting a better job, or gaining approval from your instructor, or from your friends or parents? If you do, you are more likely to put forth effort.
3. Finally, individuals are also concerned about the value of the rewards awaiting them as a result of performance. The anticipated satisfaction that will result from an outcome is labeled ***valence***. For example, do you value getting a better job, or gaining approval from your instructor, friends, or parents? If these outcomes are desirable to you, your expectancy and instrumentality is high, and you are more likely to put forth effort.

Student Op-Ed: Share a Coke, but only some of you

A consumer behaviour concept called "*expectancy theory*" can help illustrate how soft drink giant Coca-Cola (Coke) promoted class and race disparity in America. Expectancy Theory essentially explains that consumers' decisions are driven by "positive incentives" (Solomon, White & Dahl, 2014). Choosing a certain product rather than any other alternative provides a consumer with a more positive result, like a higher social status. Coke's marketing techniques during the time of America's civil rights movement and during its early competition against rival Pepsi, draws a connection between a widening socio-economic class gap and consumers' choices.

In Irene Angelico's (1998) film, "The Cola Conquest," we see how Coke was conceived in Atlanta, Georgia at the end of the American Civil War. To its core, the Coca-Cola company is a deeply southern company built through civil unrest. Specifically, Coke was born at a time when Black people were believed to be second-class citizens. And in their advertising, Coke used caricatures of Black people to demonstrate this belief. In Angelico's film, Coke is described as a symbol of nationalism to the American people: for white people this meant something to be protected; for Black people it meant everything they were denied (Angelico, 1998).

Since its conception in 1886, the soda magnate has implemented an aggressive marketing strategy to capture as much of the market as possible. So when competition and copy cats came in, Coke easily pulled through with momentum they had been building for decades. At that point, consumers already associated "Coke" with being "American." When Pepsi launched into the marketplace, arguably Coke's biggest competitor to this day, Pepsi was branded as a second class drink. People still enjoyed Pepsi, but not in public. "Real Americans" drank Coke. Pepsi was reserved for "non-Americans" (this usually meant Black Americans).

Consumers' decisions to choose Coke, as shown in the film, is born out of a desire to not be "othered" by friends, family, or strangers. Coke identified how the socioeconomic gap existing between classes could be leveraged as a positioning strategy to align the brand with emerging middle and upper-class Americans. Consequently, this ultimately meant a specific race too. I think it's critical to be aware of the fact that Coke's success came at the cost of dignity for Black Americans. I also feel that Coke, without question, operated on their collectives biases which informed their marketing: so instead of developing marketing strategies based on consumers' needs and wants, the company was guided by historical and racial differences.

Now, when I look at advertisements I have to think more critically about the messages they are conveying: what are they telling me to think? I think the truth of the matter is that while some messages will always go over my head, I need to be aware of the fact that I won't always have context for every marketing message put in front of me.

It's inevitable that how I see myself is probably always going to be tied to the products that I buy. But being smart about where I spend my money and recognizing that it's a privilege to have the freedom to choose, helps me to become a more socially responsible consumer. I think consumers need to realize that big corporations, like the Coca-Cola company, have a significant impact on shaping our cultures and that choosing a product might sometimes mean jeopardizing a whole community.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

One of the most important humanists, Abraham Maslow (1908-1970), conceptualized personality in terms of a pyramid-shaped hierarchy of motives, also called the "**Hierarchy of Needs**." At the base of the pyramid are the lowest-level motivations, including hunger and thirst, and safety and belongingness. Maslow argued that only when people are able to meet the lower-level needs are they able to move on to achieve the higher-level needs of self-esteem, and eventually self-actualization, which is the motivation to develop our innate potential to the fullest possible extent.

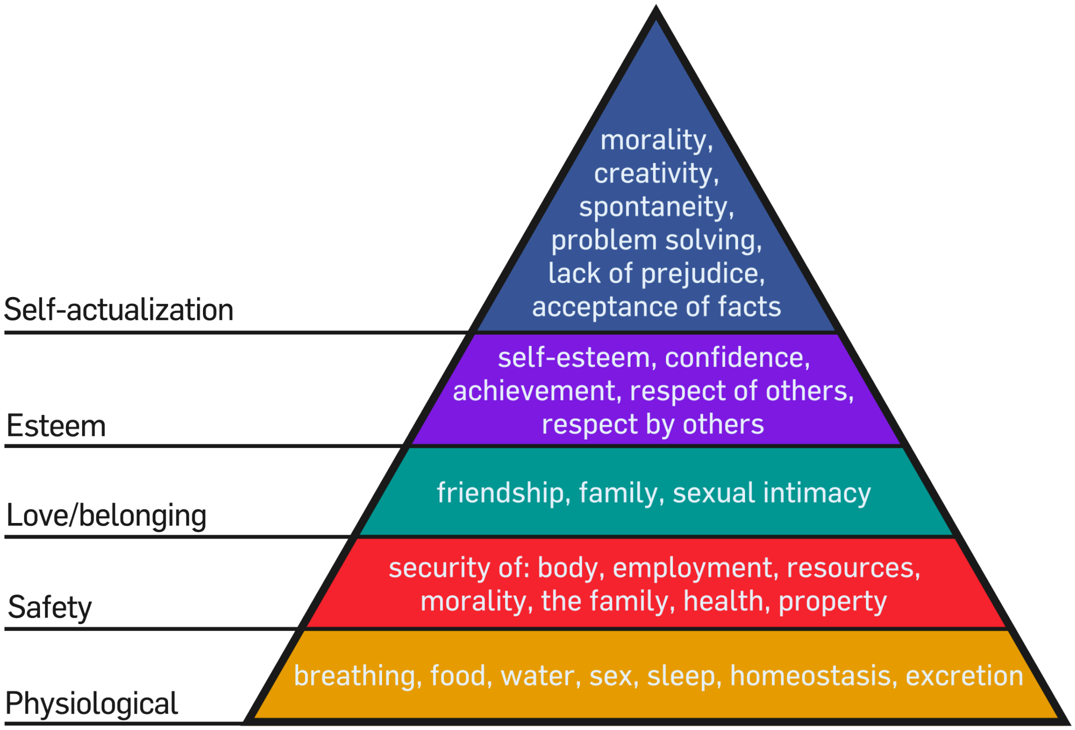
Motivating Consumers in a Time of Crisis

Following the economic crisis that began in 2008, the sales of new automobiles dropped sharply virtually everywhere around the world — except the sales of Hyundai vehicles. Hyundai understood that people needed to feel secure and safe and ran an ad campaign that assured car buyers they could return their vehicles if they couldn't make the payments on them without damaging their credit. Seeing Hyundai's success, other carmakers began offering similar programs. Likewise, banks began offering "worry-free" mortgages to ease the minds of would-be homebuyers. For a fee of about $500, First Mortgage Corp., a Texas-based bank, offered to make a homeowner's mortgage payment for six months if he or she got laid off (Jares, 2010).

Likewise, during the 2020 Coronavirus Pandemic, brands started to adopt a new line of "worry-free" messaging such as Pizza Hut's "contact-free" delivery option for consumers living under conditions of quarantine and physical isolation.

Maslow studied how successful people, including Albert Einstein, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King

Jr., Helen Keller, and Mahatma Gandhi, had been able to lead such successful and productive lives. Maslow (1970) believed that self-actualized people are creative, spontaneous, and loving of themselves and others. They tend to have a few deep friendships rather than many superficial ones, and are generally private. He felt that these individuals do not need to conform to the opinions of others because they are very confident and thus free to express unpopular opinions. Self-actualized people are also likely to have peak experiences, or transcendent moments of tranquility accompanied by a strong sense of connection with others.


morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, acceptance of facts
Self-actualization
self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others, respect by others
Esteem
friendship, family, sexual intimacy
Love/belonging
security of: body, employment, resources, morality, the family, health, property
Safety
breathing, food, water, sex, sleep, homeostasis, excretion
Physiological

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs begins at the bottom with basic or physiological needs such as water and food. Once those needs are met the next level of needs are safety, such as security and good health. The next level of needs are belonging, such as friendship and family. Once met, the next level of needs are esteem (or ego) such as the respect and admiration of others. And the final level of needs to be met are self-actualization which may be fulfilled through volunteering or creative endeavours.

Maslow & Blackfoot Nation

But did you know that Maslow's work was informed by the Blackfoot (*Niitsitapi* or *Siksikaitsitapi)* people? In 1943, Maslow spent several weeks performing anthropological research on Blackfoot territory, an experience that had a "powerful impact" on him (Taylor, 2019). Cindy Blackstock, an academic, child welfare activist, and member of Gitksan First Nation, along with Leroy Little Bear, an academic and researcher who founded the Native American Studies Department at the University of Lethridge (Little Bear later went on to be the founding director of the Native American Program at Harvard University) have both put forward that Maslow's exposure to the Blackfoot people, culture, and way of life was, "instrumental in his formation of the 'hierarchy of needs' model'" (Leroy Little Bear, n.d.; Taylor, 2019).

According to Blackstock, Maslow's model is "a rip-off from the Blackfoot nation": instead of a triangle, in the Blackfoot tradition they used a tipi to depict an upward motion to the skies (Blackstock, 2014). And, while Maslow's model places self-actualization at the top of the inverted triangle, the Blackfoot tradition identifies self-actualization as the foundation, followed by "community actualization," then "cultural perpetuity" (Lincoln Michel, 2014). As Arley Cruthers, a Communications Instructor at Kwantlen Polytechnic University points out, in Maslow's model self actualization represents the "pinnacle of human achievement," whereas for the Blackfoot, self-actualization provides a foundation for greater community and cultural purpose (Cruthers, n.d.).

To see these models side-by-side and read more about their differences and how Maslow appropriated Blackfoot culture to inform his research, visit Karen Lincoln Michel's blog post: Maslow's hierarchy connected to Blackfoot beliefs.

These two competing models remind us how cultural context shapes consumers needs and wants.

Student Op-Ed: Coca-Cola Marketing for Maslow – Using Consumer Motivation to Create Life-Long Customers

Abraham Maslow's hierarchical approach to motivation has been universally "adopted by marketers" (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015, p. 100) because it helps them to understand which level of need their target consumer is trying to meet and how to market their product to fulfill that need (Thompson, 2019). Coca-Cola (Coke) is known for its unique and innovative marketing strategies and their approach to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is no exception. Throughout history, Coke has expertly targeted every tier of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and by doing so they have created and retained dedicated life-long customers.

The first tier in Maslow's model is physiological, or basic, needs. The consumers at this level are solely seeking to satisfy their basic survival needs, such as water and staple food items (Walker, 2017). In 1986, Roberto C. Goizueta, the Chairman and CEO of Coke at the time, is quoted saying: "Eventually the number 1 beverage on earth will not be tea, or coffee, or wine, or beer, it will be soft drinks. Our soft drinks." (Angelico, Neidik, & Webb, 1998) proving that the company was determined to target the consumers in this motivation tier. Since then, Coca Cola has managed to convince consumers that it should be a staple in their diet, and for many, it has completely replaced water, but this was not always the case (Angelico et al., 1998).

In 1886, John Pemberton combined the healing properties of the coco leaf and the cola nut to create a drink that would eventually become Coca Cola; he originally created and marketed it as a "brain-tonic" or "cure-all elixir" (Angelico et al., 1998). Though Maslow would not be born for another 20 or so years (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019), Pemberton was inadvertently marketing his elixir to the second tier in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: safety needs; which includes health, security, and protection. According to Maslow, consumers will not be motivated by safety needs until their physiological needs have been met (Walker, 2017). While Coke is no longer regarded as a "health" drink, it still appeals to consumers motivated by safety needs because it provides them with the comforting feel of home. During WW2, one severely wounded American soldier even credited holding in his hand an empty Coke bottle for being "the only thing that kept him from dying all night long" (Angelico et al., 1998).

The motivational needs in the third tier, belonging and love, address consumers who feel their physiological and safety needs have been adequately satisfied who are now looking to spend more of their disposable income (Walker, 2017). This tier is an appealing choice for marketers (Walker, 2017), Coke included, due to the sheer volume of consumers motivated to make purchasing decisions that satisfy their social needs. Coke's global growth strategy resulting in the brand becoming "within an arm's reach" of the consumer at all times, combined with its air of nostalgia sentimentally depicted in advertisements featuring children and the good ol' days, resulted in many consumers purchasing Coke as a way to fulfill their intimacy motivations (Angelico et al., 1998). “Coca Cola is your friend. Wherever you go Coca Cola is always there, it’s like coming home to mother.” (Angelico et al., 1998).

The second to final tier, self-esteem needs, generally consists of luxury brands (Walker, 2017). In modern-day Eurocentric and Western cultures, we might not consider Coke a luxury item, but its early history is rooted in social status and classism. Mid-20th century, as a feature of American culture and domestic hospitality, a host would be expected to serve friends and family Coke over Pepsi, the former regarded as a luxury and the latter regarded as a, “second-class drink” (Angelico et al., 1998).

This social tier also encompasses motivations surrounding achievement, a theme present throughout Coke’s marketing since the early days when a company hanging a Coke sign out resulted in “immediate business success” (Angelico et al., 1998). Achievement and success were also strong themes developed through the brand’s sponsorship marketing strategies, namely as a feature sponsor for Olympic events including the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta (Angelico et al., 1998) , which continue to this day.

Self-actualization needs, the final tier, addresses the motivations of consumers who have already fulfilled their needs in all of the previous tiers and now desire a sense of self-fulfillment and accomplishment (Walker, 2017). Asa Candler, who transformed Coke into the soda giant we know today, appealed to consumers—name business men at the time – in this tier by claiming “a Coca Cola taken at 8, energizes the brain ‘till 11” (Angelico et al., 1998). Candler also oversaw the creation of Coke’s iconic Normal Rockwell-style of advertisements which would catalyze 2 decades of “ads linking Coke to life’s special moments” (Angelico et al., 1998).

I believe Coke is the perfect brand to study when learning about Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. Being able to market to the different motivations of consumers at each level of the model cannot be easy, but I believe it is the reason Coca Cola has maintained so much success over such a long period of time. Maslow’s model teaches us that, “[c]onsumers may have different need priorities at different times and stages of their lives” (Solomon et. al, 2015, p. 101), thus by marketing to all 5 tiers, Coca Cola can essentially guarantee life-long consumers.

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INVOLVEMENT LEVELS

Depending on a consumer's experience and knowledge, some consumers may be able to make quick purchase decisions and other consumers may need to get information and be more involved in the decision process before making a purchase. The level of involvement reflects how personally important or interested you are in consuming a product and how much information you need to make a decision. The level of involvement in buying decisions may be considered a continuum from decisions that are fairly routine (consumers are not very involved) to decisions that require extensive thought and a high level of involvement. Whether a decision is low, high, or limited, involvement varies by consumer, not by product.

Low Involvement Consumer Decision Making

At some point in your life you may have considered products you want to own (e.g. luxury or novelty items), but like many of us, you probably didn't do much more than ponder their relevance or suitability to your life. At other times, you've probably looked at dozens of products, compared them, and then decided not to purchase any one of them. When you run out of products such as milk or bread that you buy on a regular basis, you may buy the product as soon as you recognize the need because you do not need to *search for information* or *evaluate alternatives*. As Nike would put it, you "just do it." **Low-involvement** decisions are, however, typically products that are relatively inexpensive and pose a low risk to the buyer if a mistake is made in purchasing them.

Consumers often engage in **routine response behaviour** when they make low-involvement decisions — that is, they make automatic purchase decisions based on limited information or information they have gathered in the past. For example, if you always order a Diet Coke at lunch, you're engaging in routine response behaviour. You may not even think about other drink options at lunch because your routine is to order a Diet Coke, and you simply do it. Similarly, if you run out of Diet Coke at home, you may buy more without any information search.

Some low-involvement purchases are made with no planning or previous thought. These buying decisions are called **impulse buying**. While you're waiting to check out at the grocery store, perhaps you see a magazine with a notable celebrity on the cover and buy it on the spot simply because you want it. You might see a roll of tape at a check-out stand and remember you need one or you might see a bag of chips and realize you're hungry or just want them. These are items that are typically low-involvement decisions. Low involvement decisions aren't necessarily products purchased on impulse, although they can be.

High Involvement Consumer Decision Making

By contrast, **high-involvement** decisions carry a higher risk to buyers if they fail. These are often more complex purchases that may carry a high price tag, such as a house, a car, or an insurance policy. These items are not purchased often but are relevant and important to the buyer. Buyers don't engage in routine response behaviour when purchasing high-involvement products. Instead, consumers engage in what's called extended problem solving where they spend a lot of time comparing different aspects such as the features of the products, prices, and warranties.

High-involvement decisions can cause buyers a great deal of *post-purchase dissonance,* also known as **cognitive dissonance** which is a form of anxiety consumers experience if they are unsure about their purchases or if they had a difficult time deciding between two alternatives. Companies that sell high-involvement products are aware that post purchase dissonance can be a problem. Frequently, marketers try to offer consumers a lot of supporting information about their products, including why they are superior to competing brands and why the consumer won't be disappointed with their purchase afterwards. Salespeople play a critical role in answering consumer questions and providing extensive support during and after the purchasing stage.

Limited Problem Solving

Limited problem solving falls somewhere between low-involvement (routine) and high-involvement (extended problem solving) decisions. Consumers engage in limited problem solving when they already have some information about a good or service but continue to search for a little more information. Assume you need a new backpack for a hiking trip. While you are familiar with backpacks, you know that new features and materials are available since you purchased your last backpack. You're going to spend some time looking for one that's decent because you don't want it to fall apart while you're traveling and dump everything you've packed on a hiking trail. You might do a little research online and come to a decision relatively quickly. You might consider the choices available at your favourite retail outlet but not look at every backpack at every outlet before making a decision. Or you might rely on the advice of a person you know who's knowledgeable about backpacks. In some way you shorten or limit your involvement and the decision-making process.

Distinguishing Between Low Involvement and High Involvement

Table that lists sample products requiring low/high involvement throughout the decision-making process.

	Low Involvement	High Involvement
Product	Toilet paper Hand soap Light Bulbs Chewing gum Photo copy paper	Wedding dress Luxury vehicle Cruise/Vacation Designer sneakers Vacation property
Place	Wide distribution	Exclusive/Limited distribution
Price	Competitive/Low	Luxury/High
Promotion	Push marketing; mass advertising; TV; radio; billboards; coupons; sales promotions	Pull marketing; personal selling; email marketing; WOM; personalized communications
Information Search	None/Minimal	Extensive
Evaluation of Alternatives	None/Minimal	Considerable/Extensive
Purchasing Behaviour	Routine-response; automatic; impulsive	Extended problem-solving
Purchasing Frequency	High/Regular basis	Low-seldom/Special occasion

Products, such as chewing gum, which may be low-involvement for many consumers often use advertising such as commercials and sales promotions such as coupons to reach many consumers at once. Companies also try to sell products such as gum in as many locations as possible. Many products that are typically high-involvement such as automobiles may use more personal selling to answer consumers' questions. Brand names can also be very important regardless of the consumer's level of purchasing involvement. Consider a low-versus high-involvement decision — say, purchasing a tube of toothpaste versus a new car. You might routinely buy your favorite brand of toothpaste, not thinking much about the purchase (engage in routine response behaviour), but not be willing to switch to another brand either. Having a brand you like saves you "search time" and eliminates the evaluation period because you know what you're getting.

When it comes to the car, you might engage in extensive problem solving but, again, only be willing to consider a certain brand or brands (e.g. your evoke set for automobiles). For example, in the 1970s, American-made cars had such a poor reputation for quality that buyers joked that a car that's not foreign is "crap." The quality of American cars is very good today, but you get the picture. If it's a high-involvement product you're purchasing, a good brand name is probably going to be very important to you. That's why the manufacturers of products that are typically high-involvement decisions can't become complacent about the value of their brands.

Ways to Increase Involvement Levels

Involvement levels—whether they are low, high, or limited—vary by consumer and less so by product. A consumer's involvement with a particular product will depend on their experience and knowledge, as well as their general approach to gathering information before making purchasing decisions. In a highly competitive marketplace, however, brands are always vying for consumer preference, loyalty, and affirmation. For this reason, many brands will engage in marketing strategies to increase *exposure, attention, and relevance;* in other words, brands are constantly seeking ways to motivate consumers with the intention to increase consumer involvement with their products and services.

Some of the different ways marketers increase consumer involvement are: customization; engagement; incentives; appealing to hedonic needs; creating purpose; and, representation.

1. Customization

Fashion items such as shoes can be customized by manufacturers to reflect a consumer's unique personal preference, which is an effective way to increase consumer involvement

With Share a Coke, Coca-Cola made a global mass customization implementation that worked for them. The company was able to put the labels on millions of bottles in order to get consumers to notice the changes to the coke bottle in the aisle. People also felt a kinship and moment of recognition once they spotted their names or a friend's name. Simultaneously this personalization also worked because of the printing equipment that could make it happen and there are not that many first names to begin with. These factors lead the brand to be able to roll this out globally (*Mass Customization #12*, 2017).

2. Engagement

Have you ever heard the expression, "content is king"? Without a doubt, engaging, memorable, and unique marketing content has a lasting impact on consumers. The marketing landscape is a noisy one, polluted with an infinite number of brands advertising extensively to consumers, vying for a fraction of our attention. Savvy marketers recognize the importance of sparking just enough consumer interest so they become motivated to take notice and process their marketing messages. Marketers who create content (that isn't just about sales and promotion) that inspires, delights, and even serves an audience's needs are unlocking the secret to engagement. And engagement leads to loyalty.

There is no trick to content marketing, but the brands who do it well know that stepping away—far away—from the usual sales and promotion lines is critical. While content marketing is an effective way to increase sales, grow a brand, and create loyalty, authenticity is at its core.

Bodyform and Old Spice are two brands who very cleverly applied just the right amount of self-deprecating humour to their content marketing that not only engaged consumers, but had them begging for more!

Content as a Key Driver to Consumer Engagement

Engaging customers through content might involve a two-way conversation online, or an entire campaign designed around a single customer comment.

Bodyform

In 2012, Richard Neill posted a message to Bodyform's Facebook page calling out the brand for lying to and deceiving its customers and audiences for years. Richard went on to say that Bodyform's advertisements failed to truly depict any sense of reality and that in fact he felt set up by the brand to experience a huge fall. Bodyform, or as Richard addressed the company, "you crafty bugger," is a UK company that produces and sells feminine protection products to menstruating girls and women (Bodyform, n.d.). Little did Richard know that when he posted his humorous rant to Bodyform that the company would respond by creating a video speaking directly at Richard and coming "clean" on all their deceitful attempts to make having period look like fun. When Bodyform's video went viral, a brand that would have otherwise continued to blend into the background, captured the attention of a global audience.

Xavier Izaguirre says that, "[a]udience involvement is the process and act of actively involving your target audience in your communication mix, in order to increase their engagement with your message as well as advocacy to your brand." Bodyform gained global recognition by turning one person's rant into a viral publicity sensation (even though Richard was not the customer in this case).

Old Spice

Despite being a household name, in the years leading up to Old Spice's infamous "The Man Your Man Should Smell Like" campaign, sales were flat and the brand had failed to strike a chord in a new generation of consumers. Ad experts at Wieden + Kennedy produced a single 30-second ad (featuring a shirtless and self-deprecating Isaiah Mustafa) that played around the time of the 2010 Super Bowl game. While the ad quickly gained notoriety on YouTube, it was the now infamous, "Response Campaign" that made the campaign a leader of its time in audience engagement.

3. Incentives

Loyalty and reward programs encourage loyalty and repeat purchases, are also effective ways to increase consumer involvement.

Customer loyalty and reward programs successfully motivate consumers in the decision making process and reinforce purchasing behaviours (*a feature of instrumental conditioning*). The rationale for loyalty and rewards programs is clear: the cost of acquiring a new customer runs five to 25 times more than selling to an existing one and existing customers spend 67 per cent more than new customers (Bernazzani, n.d.). From the customer perspective, simple and practical reward programs such as Beauty Insider—a point-accumulation model used by Sephora—provides strong incentive for customer loyalty (Bernazzani, n.d.).

4. Appealing to Hedonic Needs

Appealing to a consumer's hedonic needs—such as the desire for a luxurious vacation—is an effective way to increase consumer involvement.

A particularly strong way to motivate consumers to increase involvement levels with a product or service is to appeal to their hedonic needs. Consumers seek to satisfy their need for fun, pleasure, and enjoyment through luxurious and rare purchases. In these cases, consumers are less likely to be price sensitive ("it's a treat") and more likely to spend greater processing time on the marketing messages they are presented with when a brand appeals to their greatest desires instead of their basic necessities.

5. Creating Purpose

Millennial and Digital Native consumers are profoundly different than those who came before them. Brands, particularly in the consumer goods category, who demonstrate (and uphold) a commitment to *sustainability* grow at a faster rate (4 per cent) than those who do not (1 per cent) ("Consumer-Goods…," 2015). In a 2015 poll, 30,000 consumers were asked how much the environment, packaging, price, marketing, and organic or health and wellness claims had on their consumer-goods' purchase decisions, and to no surprise, 66 per cent said they would be willing to pay more for sustainable brands. (Nielsen, 2015). A rising trend and important factor to consider in evaluating consumer involvement levels and ways to increase them. So while cruelty-free, fair trade, and locally-sourced may all seem like buzz words to some, they are non-negotiable decision-making factors to a large and growing consumer market.

6. Representation

VOGUE
RIHANNA
VOGUE

The use of celebrity endorsements in a brand's marketing strategy can increase consumer involvement.

Celebrity endorsement can have a profound impact on consumers' overall attitude towards a brand. Consumers who might otherwise have a "neutral" attitude towards a brand (neither positive nor negative) may be more noticed to take notice of a brand's messages and stimuli if a celebrity they admire is the face of the brand.

When sportswear and sneaker brand Puma signed Rihanna on to not just endorse the brand but design an entire collection, sales soared in all the regions and the brand enjoyed a new "revival" in the U.S. where Under Armour and Nike had been making significant gains ("Rihanna Designs…," 2017). "Rihanna's relationship with us makes the brand actual and hot again with young consumers," said chief executive Bjorn Gulden ("Rihanna Designs…," 2017).

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CHAPTER REFLECTIONS

Continue Learning

1. Watch Dan Pink's Ted Talk on Motivation. How do his examples and discussions on incentives challenge our understanding of motivation?
2. Track your consumer purchases for one week: make a list of those purchases that would be considered "high involvement" and those that would be "low involvement".
3. Think of a PSA, such as a non-smoking campaign, and identify different persuasive messages that could be applied to both Promotion and Prevention goal orientations.
4. Listen to CBC's "Under the Influence" episode called, *Have It Your Way: How Mass Customization Is Changing Marketing*. Discuss how different brands featured in this episode used mass customization to increase consumer involvement.
5. Is your name on a can of Coke? Explore Coca-Cola's marketing campaign and discuss this in the context of mass customization as a tool to increase consumer involvement.
6. How can we motivate consumers to eat more…broccoli? Explore this mock marketing campaign published by the New York Times to persuade consumers to purchase broccoli and give it the same elite "status" that kale has enjoyed in recent years. What motivational techniques are marketers using in this campaign?
7. Watch this vintage recruitment commercial by the U.S. Army. How is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs being used to motivated young men to enlist in the army?
8. Are you familiar with the chocolate bar, Snickers? Take a look at how their commercial advertisements focus on a consumer's drive state. Discuss how "reward" and "homeostasis" are featured in their advertisement.
9. Watch Wieden + Kennedy's "Old Spice Case Study" to learn more about the Response Campaign and how Old Spice engaged customers with its content thereby motivating a new generation (of mostly female) customers to take notice of the brand. Explore a more detailed history of Old Spice in Cheddar's YouTube video and discuss how the brand re-positioned itself and increased consumer involvement through advertising.
10. Interested in learning more about Maslow's time with the Blackfoot? Martin Heavy Head (*Blackfoot Nation*), wrote two Twitter threads about Abraham Maslow's time with the Blackfoot. This thread discusses Maslow's observations about the Blackfoot's idea of wealth and status, and this thread shares the Blackfoot perspective on Maslow after his visits in the 1930s.
11. Read this article on How Advertisers Scrambled To Ditch Ads and Shift Messaging During the Coronavirus Pandemic and provide your own examples that relate to the changing advertising landscape as a response to changes in consumers' needs, wants, and motivations.

TOPIC 7. PERSONALITY, LIFESTYLE AND SELF

Learning Objectives

In this section, we will learn about **personality**, lifestyle, and the self and how marketers design **lifestyle marketing** strategies using psychographic factors such as activities, interests, and opinions.

Upon completing this section, students should:

1. Define “self concept” and the various associative concepts related to it.
2. Give examples of how marketers use self-concept in marketing strategies.
3. Explain what is meant by psychographic profiling and how a marketer goes about constructing one.
4. Discuss the origins of personality research and how marketers develop “brand personality” in consumer marketing.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=78#h5p-8

- AIOs: A=Activities; I=Interests; O=Opinions…the AIO's constitute the foundation and building blocks of a person's attitudes which typically define our lifestyle choices as consumers.Archetypes: Carl Jung (1875-1961) theoretical work on personalities included archetypes, which he believed to be "ancestral memories" reflecting the common experiences of people all over the world. His explanation of archetypes included a strong belief that they were mostly biological and handed down to us. More recent research on archetypes suggests that they come from our lived experiences and reflect our cultural characteristics (and are not biological or handed down).
- Brand: A brand consists of all tangible and intangible components that form a unique identity, thus distinguishing one entity from another, particularly in a competitive category.
- Brand associations: This concept refers to the thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, experiences, believes, and attitudes from the consumer's experience that become tied to a brand. Anything linked in our memory to a brand—positive or negative—that forms a lasting impressions in the mind of a consumer.
- Brand awareness: The sum of all points of contact ("touchpoints") with a brand.
- Brand experience: The sum of all points of contact ("touchpoints") with a brand.
- Brand image: This is a symbolic construct (representation) that is created in our minds based on all the information and expectations we associate with a particular brand.
- Brand loyalty: This term refers to a consumer's commitment to repurchase a particular brand despite having other options available to them.
- Brand personality: A brand's personality is comprised of human-like characteristics that convey traits consumers can identity with themselves: warmth; excitement; comfort; edginess; old-fashion; etc. Brand personality is created to persuade and influence consumer decision making based on the belief that consumers will purchase brands that are aligned with some aspect of their self-concept or self-complexity.
- Defense mechanisms: Freud believed that when the Ego seeks to find balance between the Id and the Superego, defense mechanisms are enacted to help us reduce tension. Freud believed that our unconscious mind creates these unconscious efforts to protect the ego from being overwhelmed by anxiety.
- Extended self: This term describes situations in which consumers further identify their self-concept through their purchasing decisions and consumption choices.
- Extrinsic brand attributes: These are the features and characteristics of a brand that enable consumers to form associations with it and give it meaning—such as a brand's price, its packaging,

label, name, logo, and image.

- Five Factor Model of Personality: This model identifies five fundamental personality trait dimensions (characteristics) that are believed to be stable across time, cross-culturally shared, and an explanation for most human behaviour. Those five traits are: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism.
- Freudian theory: Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), an Austrian neurologist and founder of psychoanalysis, engaged in research and work that has shaped and influenced our contemporary understanding of personality and psychology. Freudian theory states that our behaviours are predetermined by our unconscious motivations.
- Id, ego, superego: Freud believed the mind was divided into three main components: the "Id" (the part that forms our impulsive behaviour); the "Superego" (the part that forms our consciousness and sense of morality); and, the "Ego" (the part that forms our sense of reality and balances the Id and Superego).
- Ideal self: An idealized version of ourselves that is based on several factors including our experiences, the expectations we feel society has of us, and the traits we admire in others.
- Intrinsic brand attributes: These are the functional features and characteristics of a brand—such as its shape, performance, and capacity.
- Lifestyle marketing: Marketing campaigns designed to influence, persuade, and appeal to a consumer's "AIO's," values, worldviews, and personality identity.
- Looking glass self: Sometimes our self-concept is formed through our interactions with others and in these interactions we come to see, describe, and evaluate ourselves based on their reaction's to us.
- Neo-Freudian theories: Neo-Freudian theories were developed by psychologist and psychoanalysis — many of whom were students of Freud's. They all developed their own theories on personality which either built on Freud's work or challenged it completely. Erik Erikson, Carl Jung, and Karen Horney are three of those people.
- Persona: Carl Jung (1875-1961) proposed the idea of a persona, which he explained as a sort of "mask" that we adopt that represents compromise between our "true self" and the person society expects us to be.
- Personality: A way to describe the various human characteristics that make us all different from one another.
- Personality traits: Personality traits refer to the basic dimensions that make us all different from one another.
- Person-situation debate: This concept supports the belief that our personalities are not consistent from one situation to the next. The belief here is that our personalities (and subsequent behaviours) are shaped by situational factors (e.g. what is happening in the environment around us).
- Psychographic segmentation: A marketing activity that involves the profiling of a market segment

based on characteristics such as AIO's, personality, traits, lifestyle, and values. Psychographic segmentation undergoes a detailed and close examination of consumers with respect to their motivations, values, and media consumption habits.

- Reference groups: The groups of people in our lives that we use for social comparisons. Reference groups are used in social comparison theory.
- Self-affirmation theory: This theory suggests that people will try to reduce any threat to their own self-concept by focusing on (and affirming) their worth in a different and unrelated area.
- Self-awareness: The degree of cognitive awareness we have about ourselves.
- Self-complexity: This term explains the range in complexities some selves are compared to others. A more complex self suggests that we have several different ways of thinking about ourselves.
- Self-concept: This term describes how we see, understand, describe, and evaluate ourselves.
- Self-consciousness: This term describes the degree of self-awareness we experience when we are in situations that might make us feel uncomfortable (e.g. public judgement)and more aware of our self-concept.
- Self-efficacy: A person's belief in their own ability to succeed in a particular situation, context, or environment.
- Self-esteem: This term refers to the positive or negative feelings we have about ourselves. Self-esteem is most often determined by our own performance, appearance, and our relationships with others.
- Self-schemas: This terms describes how an aging and more complex self-concept becomes organized into different categories of the self.
- Social comparison theory: This theory explains how we further define our self-concept by comparing ourselves to other people. The comparisons are based on two dimensions: superiority/inferiority and similarity/difference. We use reference groups for social comparison.

PERSONALITY AND PERSONALITY TRAITS

Personality is derived from our interactions with and observations of others, from our interpretations of those interactions and observations, and from our choices of which social situations we prefer to enter or avoid (Bandura, 1986). In fact, behaviourists such as B. F. Skinner explain personality entirely in terms of the environmental influences that the person has experienced. Because we are profoundly influenced by the situations that we are exposed to, our behaviour does change from situation to situation, making personality less stable than we might expect. And yet personality does matter — we can, in many cases, use personality measures to predict behaviour across situations.

Personality Traits

When we observe people around us, one of the first things that strikes us is how different people are from one another. Some people are very talkative while others are very quiet. Some exhibit active behaviour whereas others may live a more sedentary lifestyle. Some worry a lot, others almost never seem anxious. Each time we use one of these words, words like "talkative," "quiet," "active," or "anxious," to describe those around us, we are talking about a person's personality — the characteristic ways that people differ from one another. Personality psychologists try to describe and understand these differences.

Although there are many ways to think about the personalities that people have, Gordon Allport and other "personologists" claimed that we can best understand the differences between individuals by understanding their personality traits. **Personality traits** reflect basic dimensions on which people differ (Matthews, Deary, & Whiteman, 2003).

An important feature of personality traits is that they reflect continuous distributions rather than distinct personality types. This means that when personality psychologists talk about Introverts and Extraverts, they are not really talking about two distinct types of people who are completely and qualitatively different from one another. Instead, they are talking about people who score relatively low or relatively high along a continuous distribution. In fact, when personality psychologists measure traits like *Extraversion*, they typically find that most people score somewhere in the middle, with smaller numbers showing more extreme levels.

There are three criteria that are characterize personality traits: *(1) consistency, (2) stability, and (3) individual differences.*

1. To have a personality trait, individuals must be somewhat ***consistent*** across situations in their

behaviours related to the trait. For example, if they are talkative at home, they tend also to be talkative at work.

2. Individuals with a trait are also somewhat ***stable*** over time in behaviours related to the trait. If they are talkative, for example, at age 30, they will also tend to be talkative at age 40.
3. People ***differ*** from one another on behaviours related to the trait. Sleeping is not a personality trait and neither is consuming food — virtually all individuals do these activities, and there are almost no individual differences. But people differ on how frequently they talk and how active they are, and thus personality traits such as Talkativeness and Activity Level do exist.

Traits are important and interesting because they describe stable patterns of behaviour that persist for long periods of time (Caspi, Roberts, & Shiner, 2005). Importantly, these stable patterns can have broad-ranging consequences for many areas of our life (Roberts, Kuncel, Shiner, Caspi, & Goldberg, 2007). For instance, think about the factors that determine success in college. If you were asked to guess what factors predict good grades in college, you might guess something like intelligence. This guess would be correct, but we know much more about who is likely to do well. Specifically, personality researchers have also found the personality traits like *Conscientiousness* play an important role in college and beyond, probably because highly conscientious individuals study hard, get their work done on time, and are less distracted by nonessential activities that take time away from school work. In addition, highly conscientious people are often healthier than people low in conscientiousness because they are more likely to maintain healthy diets, to exercise, and to follow basic safety procedures like wearing seat belts or bicycle helmets. Over the long term, this consistent pattern of behaviours can add up to meaningful differences in health and longevity.

Thus, personality traits are not just a useful way to describe people you know; they actually help psychologists predict how good a worker someone will be, how long he or she will live, and the types of jobs and activities the person will enjoy. Thus, there is growing interest in personality psychology among psychologists who work in applied settings, such as health psychology or organizational psychology.

Why Personality Traits Matter in Marketing

Various personality types, like people with various motives, are likely to respond in different ways to different market offerings. For example, an *extrovert* may enjoy the shopping experience and rely more on personal observation to secure information; thus, in-store promotion would become an important communication tool. Knowing the basic personality traits of target customers can be useful information for the manager in designing the marketing mix. Marketers have, however, found personality to be difficult to apply in developing marketing strategy. The primary reason for this is the lack of good ways to measure personality traits. Most available measures were developed to identify people with problems that needed medical attention. These have little value with consumers who are mentally healthy. As a result, most marketers have turned to lifestyle analysis.

The Five Factor Model

The fundamental work on trait dimensions conducted by Allport, Cattell, Eysenck, and many others has led to contemporary trait models, the most important and well validated of which is the **Five-Factor** (**Big Five**) **Model of Personality**. According to this model, there are five fundamental underlying trait dimensions that are stable across time, cross-culturally shared, and explain a substantial proportion of behaviour (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1982).

Descriptions of the Big Five Personality Traits (Diener & Lucas, 2019)

A large body of research evidence has supported the five-factor model. This system includes five broad traits that can be remembered with the acronym “OCEAN”: *Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism*. Each of the major traits from the Big Five can be divided into facets to give a more fine-grained analysis of someone’s personality.

Table that lists key features of the Big 5 Traits

Big 5 Trait	**Definition**	**Key Features**
Openness	The tendency to appreciate new art, ideas, values, feelings, and behaviours	• Fantasy prone • Open to feelings • Open to new and different ideas • Open to various values and beliefs
Conscientiousness	The tendency to be careful, on-time for appointments, to follow rules, and to be hardworking.	• Competent • Orderly • Dutiful • Achievement oriented • Self-disciplined • Deliberate
Extraversion	The tendency to be talkative, sociable, and to enjoy others; the tendency to have a dominant style.	• Gregarious (sociable) • Warm • Assertive • Active • Excitement-seeking • Positive emotionality
Agreeableness	The tendency to agree and go along with others rather than to assert one's own opinions and choices.	• Trusting • Straightforward • Altruistic • Compliant • Modest • Tender-minded
Neuroticism	The tendency to frequently experience negative emotions such as anger, worry, and sadness, as well as being interpersonally sensitive.	• Anxious • Angry • Depressed • Self-consciousness • Impulsive • Vulnerable

An advantage of the five-factor approach is that it is parsimonious. Rather than studying hundreds of traits, researchers can focus on only five underlying dimensions. The Big Five may also capture other dimensions that have been of interest to psychologists. For instance, the trait dimension of need for achievement relates to the Big Five variable of conscientiousness, and self-esteem relates to low neuroticism. On the other hand, the Big Five factors do not seem to capture all the important dimensions of personality. For instance, the Big Five do not capture moral behaviour, although this variable is important in many theories of personality. And there is evidence that the Big Five factors are not exactly the same across all cultures (Cheung & Leung, 1998).

Online Gamers, Shoppers, & the Five Factor Model

Oooh wow, presents! Let's walk and collect 2 tappables to see what we can find. Be careful, don't trespass!
0/2 COLLECTED

Studying the personality traits of online gamers can help marketers design strategies that better reach their target audiences.

A group of researchers in Spain examined online gamer behaviour and how personality influences self-efficacy (*the belief in our own capability to successfully accomplish what we set out to do*).

Below is a summary of their research showing how different traits of the Five Factor Model influence gaming self-efficacy:

- *Conscientiousness*: positively associated with task fulfillment and job performance. In the context of gaming, it can be assumed that game players must be persistent if they are to achieve game goals and be successful.

- *Neuroticism*: negatively influences self-efficacy. Individuals' psychological distress may limit their ability to become skilled and thus obtain the expected achievements in a game.
- *Extraversion*: positively influences self-efficacy. Interacting with other people, coupled with a tendency to be sociable, may increase their knowledge of the game and their abilities and skills when playing it (Yam, et al., 2017)
- *Agreeableness*: results are mixed. On the one hand, there is a significant relationship between agreeableness and brand loyalty in the case of video games (Lin 2010), on the other, there exists a negative effect of agreeableness and Internet usage (Landers & Lounsbury, 2006). Overall, Saleem et al (2011) find that agreeableness negatively influences self-efficacy.
- *Openness*: positively influences self-efficacy. Individuals displaying openness are more willing to try something new and also possess good imagination. An open mind is usually an advantage when solving problems at work and in life.

Online gamers are expected to display greater self-efficacy if they are organized and persistent (*conscientious*); not worried, nervous and emotionally stable (*not neurotic)*; sociable, optimistic and talkative (*extrovert*); unforgiving, cold and skeptical (*not agreeable*) and curious, creative and imaginative (*open*).

How personality studies can help marketers

What are the implications for marketers? The authors of the study share how their research can also serve marketing managers of online games:

> Our results reveal how gaming might have practical implications for marketing managers. If firms teach players how to play, it could indirectly promote the online purchase of related products, which also supports the effectiveness of gamification strategies. In this sense, Huotari and Hamari (2012) propose the use of gamification strategies to offer a good video game, with added value, thus enhancing the playing experience and entailing benefits for both game developers and players alike. Keeping in mind that central to the game model is consumer choice, players will accept better non-imposed marketing strategies. In this sense, game developers may let master players (i.e., that show high gaming efficacy) to exchange information (tips, strategies or trick) for extra features with others, making easy microtransaction process between consumers (C2C commerce inside the game).

(As a parent of two children who have both grown up playing Minecraft, I can say with certainty that the influence master and expert players have on children is strong! My kids can spend hours (no judgement, please) watching YouTube videos of how master players build and defend fortresses, uncover hidden treasures, and mine ore.)

Research also provides evidence about the link between mobile gaming and online shopping behaviour (Balakrishnan and Griffiths, 2018). Xu, Chen & Santhanam's 2105 study has found that richer online formats and recommendations throughout video games enhance consumers' perceptions about experience products and positively affect consumers' intentions to purchase products.

Recent data (Gaming Industry…2018), from Statista (2019) suggest that video gamers conduct in-game purchases, such as upgrades, additional lives, currency, personalized avatars, an ad-free experience, unrestricted playing time or special items (i.e., famous football players' avatars or skins that modifies the appearance of a character or item), and consumer spending on in-game purchases will grow until 32 billion in 2020. In fact, 4% of global iOS device users and 3% of Android users are making in-game purchases per month and ("Mobile Gaming…," 2019).

Since users decide to adopt one activity they tend to another similar one (Eastin, 2002). This is why the authors of the study state that:

> Therefore, when consumers exhibit self-efficacy playing a video game, they will probably display this ability when purchasing related products. Therefore, we propose that video gamers acquire several skills when playing, the fact that allow them to feel more self-confident and effective when using online shopping platforms to buy games or accessories.

The Person-Situation Debate & Alternatives to the Trait Perspective

The ideas described in this section should probably seem familiar, if not obvious to you. When asked to think about what our friends, enemies, family members, and colleagues are like, some of the first things that come to mind are their personality characteristics. We might think about how warm and helpful our first teacher was, how irresponsible and careless our brother is, or how demanding and insulting our first boss was. Each of these descriptors reflects a personality trait, and most of us generally think that the descriptions that we use for individuals accurately reflect their "characteristic pattern of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours," or in other words, their personality.

But what if this idea was wrong? What if our belief in personality traits were an illusion and people are not consistent from one situation to the next? This was a possibility that shook the foundation of personality psychology in the late 1960s when Walter Mischel published a book called *Personality and Assessment* (1968). In this book, Mischel suggested that if one looks closely at people's behaviour across many different situations, the consistency is really not that impressive. In other words, children who cheat on tests at school may steadfastly follow all rules when playing games and may never tell a lie to their parents. In other words, he suggested, there may not be any general trait of honesty that links these seemingly related behaviours. Furthermore, Mischel suggested that observers may believe that broad personality traits like honesty exist, when in fact, this belief is an illusion. The debate that followed the publication of Mischel's book was called the **person-situation debate** because it pitted the power of personality against the power of situational factors as determinants of the behaviour that people exhibit.

Because of the findings that Mischel emphasized, many psychologists focused on an alternative to the trait perspective. Instead of studying broad, context-free descriptions, like the trait terms we've described so far, Mischel thought that psychologists should focus on people's distinctive reactions to specific situations. For instance, although there may not be a broad and general trait of honesty, some children may be especially likely to cheat on a test when the risk of being caught is low and the rewards for cheating are high. Others might be motivated by the sense of risk involved in cheating and may do so even when the rewards are not very high. Thus, the behaviour itself results from the child's unique evaluation of the risks and rewards present at that moment, along with her evaluation of her abilities and values. Because of this, the same child might act very differently in different situations.

Thus, Mischel thought that specific behaviours were driven by the interaction between very specific, psychologically meaningful features of the situation in which people found themselves, the person's unique way of perceiving that situation, and his or her abilities for dealing with it. Mischel and others argued that it was these social-cognitive processes that underlie people's reactions to specific situations that provide some consistency when situational features are the same. If so, then studying these broad traits might be more fruitful than cataloging and measuring narrow, context-free traits like Extraversion or Neuroticism.

In the years after the publication of Mischel's (1968) book, debates raged about whether personality truly exists, and if so, how it should be studied. And, as is often the case, it turns out that a more moderate middle ground than what the situationists proposed could be reached. It is certainly true, as Mischel pointed out, that a person's behaviour in one specific situation is not a good guide to how that person will behave in a very different specific situation. Someone who is extremely talkative at one specific party may sometimes be reticent to speak up during class and may even act like a wallflower at a different party. But this does not mean that personality does not exist, nor does it mean that people's behaviour is completely determined by situational factors. Indeed, research conducted after the person-situation debate shows that on average, the effect of the "situation" is about as large as that of personality traits.

However, it is also true that if psychologists assess a broad range of behaviours across many different situations, there are general tendencies that emerge. Personality traits give an indication about how people will act on average, but frequently they are not so good at predicting how a person will act in a specific situation at a certain moment in time. Thus, to best capture broad traits, one must assess *aggregate* behaviours, averaged over time and across many different types of situations. Most modern personality researchers agree that there is a place for broad personality traits and for the narrower units such as those studied by Walter Mischel.

Media Attributions

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SELF AND IDENTITY

The link between people's personalities and their buying behaviour is somewhat unclear, but market researchers continue to study it. For example, some studies have shown that "sensation seekers," or people who exhibit extremely high levels of openness, are more likely to respond well to advertising that's violent and graphic. The practical problem for firms is figuring out "who's who" in terms of their personalities. Marketers have had better luck linking people's **self-concept** to their buying behaviour. Your self-concept is how you see yourself — be it positive or negative. Your **ideal self** is how you would *like* to see yourself — whether it's muscular, more popular, more eco-conscious, or more conservative.

Self-Concept

Part of what is developing in children as they grow is the fundamental cognitive part of the self, known as the self-concept. The self-concept is a knowledge representation that contains knowledge about us, including our beliefs about our personality traits, physical characteristics, abilities, values, goals, and roles, as well as the knowledge that we exist as individuals. Throughout childhood and adolescence, the self-concept becomes more abstract and complex and is organized into a variety of different cognitive aspects of the self, known as **self-schemas.** Children have self-schemas about their progress in school, their appearance, their skills at sports and other activities, and many other aspects. In turn, these self-schemas direct and inform their processing of self-relevant information (Harter, 1999), much as we saw schemas in general affecting our social cognition.

Self-Complexity

Although every human being has a complex self-concept, there are nevertheless individual differences in **self-complexity**, the extent to which individuals have many different and relatively independent ways of thinking about themselves (Linville, 1987; Roccas & Brewer, 2002). Some selves are more complex than others, and these individual differences can be important in determining psychological outcomes. Having a complex self means that we have a lot of different ways of thinking about ourselves. For example, imagine a woman whose self-concept contains the social identities of student, girlfriend, daughter, marketing student, and hockey player and who has encountered a wide variety of life experiences. Social psychologists would say that she has high self-complexity. On the other hand, a man who perceives himself primarily as either a student or as a member of the theatre ensemble and who has had a relatively narrow range of life experiences would be said to have low self-complexity. For those with high self-complexity, the various aspects of the self are separate, as the positive and negative thoughts about a particular self-aspect do not spill over into thoughts about other aspects.

Ideal Self

The **ideal self** consists of the attributes that you or someone else *would like you* to possess. The slogan "Be All That You Can Be," which for years was used by the U.S. Army to recruit soldiers, is an attempt to appeal to this self-concept. Presumably, by joining the U.S. Army, you will become a better version of yourself, which will, in turn, improve your life. Many beauty products and cosmetic procedures are advertised in a way that's supposed to appeal to the ideal self people seek. All of us want products that improve our lives.

Self-Awareness

Like any other schema, the self-concept can vary in its current cognitive accessibility. **Self-awareness** refers to the extent to which we are currently fixing our attention on our own self-concept. When our self-concept becomes highly accessible because of our concerns about being observed and potentially judged by others, we experience the publicly induced self-awareness known as **self-consciousness** (Duval & Wicklund, 1972; Rochat, 2009).

According to self-awareness theory(Duval & Wicklund, 1972), when we focus our attention on ourselves, we tend to compare our current behaviour against our internal standards. Sometimes when we make these comparisons, we realize that we are not currently measuring up. In these cases, self-discrepancy theory states that when we perceive a discrepancy between our actual and ideal selves, this is distressing to us (Higgins, Klein, & Strauman, 1987). In contrast, on the occasions when self-awareness leads us to comparisons where we feel that we are being congruent with our standards, then self-awareness can produce positive affect (Greenberg & Musham, 1981). Tying these ideas from the two theories together, Philips and Silvia (2005) found that people felt significantly more distressed when exposed to self-discrepancies while sitting in front of a mirror. In contrast, those not sitting in front of a mirror, and presumably experiencing lower self-awareness, were not significantly emotionally affected by perceived self-discrepancies. Simply put, the more self-aware we are in a given situation, the more pain we feel when we are not living up to our ideals.

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem refers to the positive (high self-esteem) or negative (low self-esteem) feelings that we have about ourselves. We experience the positive feelings of high self-esteem when we believe that we are good and worthy and that others view us positively. We experience the negative feelings of low self-esteem when we believe that we are inadequate and less worthy than others.

Our self-esteem is determined by many factors, including how well we view our own performance and appearance, and how satisfied we are with our relationships with other people (Tafarodi & Swann, 1995). Self-esteem is in part a trait that is stable over time, with some people having relatively high self-esteem and others having lower self-esteem. But self-esteem is also a state that varies day to day and even hour to hour. When we have succeeded at an important task, when we have done something that we think is useful or important, or when we feel that we are accepted and valued by others, our self-concept will contain many positive thoughts and we will therefore have high self-esteem. When we have failed, done something harmful, or feel that we have been ignored or criticized, the negative aspects of the self-concept are more accessible and we experience low self-esteem.

Looking-Glass Self

Our self-concept is also formed through our interactions with others and their reactions to us. The concept of the **looking-glass self** explains that we see ourselves reflected in other people's reactions to us and then form our self-concept based on how we believe other people see us (Cooley, 1902). This reflective process of building our self-concept is based on what other people have actually said, such as "You're a good listener," and other people's actions, such as coming to you for advice. These thoughts evoke emotional responses that feed into our self-concept. For example, you may think, "I'm glad that people can count on me to listen to their problems."

Student Op-Ed: Marketers' Influence on Consumers' Self-Esteem

Marketers can have a huge impact on a consumer's self-esteem (Solomon, 2014). The concept of self-esteem refers to your personal value or the way you view yourself (Solomon, 2014). People with low self-esteem have low confidence, and try to avoid embarrassment, failure, or rejection (Solomon, 2014). In contrast, people with high self-esteem are confident, will take more risks, and are more willing to attract attention to themselves (Solomon, 2014). Some marketers may target consumers with low self-esteem and use messaging around their products or services that promise the benefits of high self-esteem. These tactics are typically employed to increase both brand exposure and sales. Repetitive and extensive exposure to ads featuring idealized images of happy, attractive people can trigger a process known as social comparison which can have a direct impact on a consumer's self-esteem (Solomon, 2014).

Marketers are advertising to consumers with low self-esteem to increase sales and liquidity of the company. The brand Dove created a "Dove Self-Esteem Project" which encourages consumers to write about and share with others what their version of 'real beauty' means (Millard, 2009). While Dove has created this platform, presumably to support female consumers in reframing the conversation around body positivity, beauty, and self-esteem, the brand continues to position its products as a 'solution' for those seeking happiness and beauty (Millard, 2009). Moreover, where does this leave consumers who don't purchase their products? How can those consumers feel anything but inadequate or 'not good enough' given the brand is so tightly positioned as a means to improving one's quality of life (Millard, 2009)? Since the Dove Self-Esteem Project started, product sales have increased: Dove claims that consumers' self-esteem also increases when its products are purchased (and thereby also decreases when products are not purchased (Millard, 2009)).

The L'Oréal company specifically targets self-esteem by promoting thin models with a full face of make-up who state the company's catchphrase, "you're worth it" (L'Oréal Paris 2018). Despite the brand dedicating a page on its website to promote self-worth, once the consumer views the company's ads social comparison can be triggered, leading to a decrease in self-esteem unless the product is purchased (L'Oréal Paris 2018). Moreover, L'Oréal claims that their products increase 'true beauty' and consequently, product sales have increased steadily since the promotion of 'self-worth' (L'Oréal Paris 2018). This gives further evidence to the fact that marketers have shifted messages away from product utility towards consumer happiness: messages that seek to improve self-esteem by promoting consumers' "worth" because they "deserve to feel beautiful" suggest these products are the only means to these ends.

It could very well be that marketers are hoping to improve the self-esteem of their consumers, however I am concerned about the possibility that some consumers are negatively impacted by messages that suggest only specific products can achieve results and give consumers the beauty, confidence, and happiness they might be longing for. In addition, I believe marketers have a moral responsibility to reinforce that beauty comes from within, not from a jar, tube, or container. It's not honest to suggest that a certain product will make you feel or be, your best, authentic self. While I am happy to see that Dove has made a self-esteem project for people to express themselves and feel heard, it's important to acknowledge that the concept of beauty is different for each and every person. In researching this piece, I discovered that there is wide criticism of Dove's definition of beauty: it is said to be too narrow and ignores the studies which claim that 69 per cent of women agree that they don't see themselves reflected in advertising, television or movies (Millard, 2009). My hope is that marketers now and in the future will engage more responsibly and create more relatable content that inspires everyone and doesn't guilt customers into their purchasing decisions.

The Extended Self

Some consumers may either unconsciously or consciously, use their consumption choices—for examples the brands they favour and purchase—as a way to express who they are, what they value, and how they want to be perceived. When their sense of self is further defined by these possessions, we call it the **Extended Self**. When a consumer selects a particular pair of sneakers, jeans, or cell phone, they are expressing some sense of "self" and identifying how they want to stand out from some, or fit in with others. In this manner, the brands we select and the possessions we showcase reflect both a sense of autonomy (i.e. distinction or uniqueness) and affiliation (i.e. conformity) (Kleine and Kleine, 1995). The brands we select also communicate our own values: for example, consumers who choose brands that are "green" (sustainable) may be expressing a value for environmental conservatism and climate action.

Social Comparison Theory

We also develop our self-concept through comparisons to other people. **Social comparison theory** states that we describe and evaluate ourselves in terms of how we compare to other people. Social comparisons are based on two dimensions: superiority/inferiority and similarity/difference (Hargie, 2011). In terms of superiority and inferiority, we evaluate characteristics like attractiveness, intelligence, athletic ability, and so on. For example, you may judge yourself to be more intelligent than your brother or less athletic than your best friend, and these judgments are incorporated into your self-concept. This process of comparison and evaluation isn't necessarily a bad thing, but it can have negative consequences if our reference group isn't appropriate.

Reference groups are the groups we use for social comparison, and they typically change based on what we are evaluating. In terms of athletic ability, many people choose unreasonable reference groups with which to engage in social comparison. If a man wants to get into better shape and starts an exercise routine, he may be discouraged by his difficulty keeping up with the aerobics instructor or running partner and judge himself as inferior, which could negatively affect his self-concept. Using as a reference group people who have only recently started a fitness program but have shown progress could help maintain a more accurate and hopefully positive self-concept.

We also engage in social comparison based on similarity and difference. Since self-concept is context specific, similarity may be desirable in some situations and difference more desirable in others. Factors like age and personality may influence whether or not we want to fit in or stand out. Although we compare ourselves to others throughout our lives, adolescent and teen years usually bring new pressure to be similar to or different from particular reference groups. Think of all the cliques in high school and how people voluntarily and involuntarily broke off into groups based on popularity, interest, culture, or grade level. Some kids in your high school probably wanted to fit in with and be similar to other people in the marching band but be different from the football players. Conversely, athletes were probably more apt to compare themselves, in terms of similar athletic ability, to other athletes rather than kids in show choir. But social comparison can be complicated by perceptual influences. As we learned earlier, we organize information based on similarity and difference, but these patterns don't always hold true. Even though students involved in athletics and students involved in arts may seem very different, a dancer or singer may also be very athletic, perhaps even more so than a member of the football team. As with other aspects of perception, there are positive and negative consequences of social comparison.

We generally want to know where we fall in terms of ability and performance as compared to others, but what people do with this information and how it affects self-concept varies. Not all people feel they need to be at the top of the list, but some won't stop until they get the high score on the video game or set a new school record in a track-and-field event. Some people strive to be first chair in the clarinet section of the orchestra, while another person may be content to be second chair. The education system promotes social comparison through grades and rewards such as honor rolls and dean's lists.

Self-Affirmation Theory

There are certain situations, however, where these common dissonance-reduction strategies may not be realistic options to pursue. For example, if someone who has generally negative attitudes toward drug use nevertheless becomes addicted to a particular substance, it will often not be easy to quit the habit, to reframe the evidence regarding the drug's negative effects, or to reduce self-awareness. In such cases, **self-affirmation theory** suggests that people will try to reduce the threat to their self-concept posed by feelings of self-discrepancy by focusing on and affirming their worth in another domain, unrelated to the issue at hand. For instance, the person who has become addicted to an illegal substance may choose to focus on healthy eating and exercise regimes instead as a way of reducing the dissonance created by the drug use.

Self-Affirmation in Consumer Behaviour

How might consumers reconcile their consumption and disposal behaviour using self-affirmation theory? Many years ago, shortly before having my first child, I had planned to only use cloth diapers and not succumb to the convenience of disposable diapers. I romanticized about being an "ideal" parent who would make sustainable consumer decisions throughout my life as a parent. While my intentions may have been honourable, they were also naive: little did I know how the first few days, weeks, and even months of parenting could bring on so much stress, chaos, and uncertainty (never mind sleep deprivation).

Deciding to place convenience above all else, I used disposable diapers from day one: and while in the back of my mind I felt dissonance about this decision, I reduced that dissonance by toilet-training my daughter at an early age (thus ending our dependence on a disposable product). I also sought out other acts of sustainability (making baby food; buying second hand clothing) to further reduce dissonance.

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LIFESTYLE AND PSYCHOGRAPHICS

One of the newer and increasingly important set of factors that is being used to understand consumer behaviour is lifestyle. Lifestyle has been generally defined as the **attitudes** (**or attitudes**), **interests, and opinions** (**AIOs**) of the potential customer. It is widely regarded as means to connecting products offered in the market with targeted lifestyle groups (Sathish & Rajamohan, 2012) such that a product appeals to the AIOs of the target market. Consumers are not only asked about products they like, where they live, and what their gender is but also about what they do—that is, how they spend their time and what their priorities, values, opinions, and general outlooks on the world are. Where do they go other than work? Who do they like to talk to? What do they talk about? Researchers hired by Procter & Gamble have gone so far as to follow women around for weeks as they shop, run errands, and socialize with one another (Berner, 2006). Other companies have paid people to keep a daily journal of their activities and routines.

Lifestyle Marketing

In consumer marketing, **lifestyle** is considered a psychological variable known to influence the buyer decision process for consumers. Lifestyle can be broadly defined as the way a person lives. In sociology, a lifestyle typically reflects an individual's attitudes, values, or world view. A lifestyle is a means of forging a sense of self and to create cultural symbols that resonate with personal identity.

Marketing campaigns to reach and persuade consumers are created with the intention to align the product's position with the target market's lifestyle characteristics. Variables such as consumers' interest in hunting; their attitude toward climate change; and, their deeply held opinion on fair-trade products, can therefore be used to both better understand the market and its behaviour, and position products effectively.

It is the multifaceted aspect of lifestyle research that makes it so useful in consumer analysis. A prominent lifestyle researcher, Joseph T. Plummer, summarizes the concept as follows:

> "…lifestyle patterns, combines the virtues of demographics with the richness and dimensionality of psychological characteristics….Lifestyle is used to segment the marketplace because it provides the broad, everyday view of consumers lifestyle segmentation and can generate identifiable whole persons rather than isolated fragments" (Plummer, 1974).

A useful application of the lifestyle concept relates to consumer's *shopping orientation*. Different customers approach shopping in very different ways. They have different attitudes and opinions about shopping and different levels of interest in shopping. Once people know their alternatives, how do they evaluate and choose among them? In particular, how do people choose among brands of a product?

Psychographic Segmentation

The following is a review of how marketers segment a market based on demographics, geography, behaviour, and psychographic information.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=92#h5p-9

- Demographic segmentation: Demographic segmentation divides the market into groups based on such variables as age, marital status, gender, ethnic background, income, occupation, and education.
  Age, for example, will be of interest to marketers who develop products for children, retailers who cater to teenagers, colleges and universities that recruit students, and assisted-living facilities that promote services among the elderly. W Network targets female viewers, while TeleLatino Network (TLN) networks targets Spanish-speaking viewers. When Mazda Canada offers recent college and university graduates a $400 bonus toward leasing or buying a new Mazda, the company's marketers are segmenting the market according to education level.
- Geographic segmentation: Geographic segmentation divides a market according to such variables as climate, region, and population density (urban, suburban, small-town, or rural)—is also quite common. Climate is crucial for many products: try selling snow shovels in Hawaii or above-ground pools in the Yukon. Consumer tastes also vary by region. That's why McDonald's caters to regional preferences, offering poutine at Canadian locations, whereas in the United States you can get a breakfast of Spam, sausage and rice in Hawaii, lobster rolls in New England and country ham, biscuits and gravy in the southern states. Outside of North America, menus diverge even more widely. You can get a McPaneer Royale in India, Mozzarella Dippers in the UK, a prawn burger in Singapore and gazpacho in Spain.
  Likewise, differences between urban and suburban life can influence product selection. For example, it's a hassle to parallel park on crowded city streets. Thus, Toyota engineers have developed a product especially for city dwellers. The Japanese version of the Prius, Toyota's hybrid gas-electric car, can automatically parallel park itself. Using computer software and a rear-

mounted camera, the parking system measures the spot, turns the steering wheel, and swings the car into the space (making the driver—who just sits there—look like a master of parking skills). After its success in the Japanese market, the self-parking feature was brought to the United States.

- Behavioural segmentation: Dividing consumers by such variables as attitude toward the product, user status, or usage rate is called behavioural segmentation. Companies selling technology-based products might segment the market according to different levels of receptiveness to technology. They could rely on a segmentation scale developed by Forrester Research that divides consumers into two camps: technology optimists, who embrace new technology, and technology pessimists, who are indifferent, anxious, or downright hostile when it comes to technology.
  Some companies segment consumers according to user status, distinguishing among nonusers, potential users, first-time users, and regular users of a product. Depending on the product, they can then target specific groups, such as first-time users. Credit-card companies use this approach when they offer frequent flyer miles to potential customers in order to induce them to get their card. Once they start using it, they'll probably be segmented according to usage. "Heavy users" who pay their bills on time will likely get increased credit lines.
- Psychographic segmentation: Psychographic segmentation classifies consumers on the basis of individual lifestyles as they're reflected in people's interests, activities, attitudes, and values. Do you live an active life and love the outdoors? If so, you may be a potential buyer of hiking or camping equipment or apparel. If you're a risk taker, you might catch the attention of a gambling casino. The possibilities are limited only by the imagination.

While demographics are useful, advertisers often need to slice and dice even further. Traditional demographic segments (such as gender, age, and income) provide only a rough estimate of the attitudes and desires of different groups, so marketers often give consumer groups labels that capture something about their lifestyles and motivations as well.

Psychographic segmentation involves profiling a market segment based on a descriptive set of characteristics—such as *personality, traits, lifestyle, and values.* We also use AIO's—to define a psychographic profile. Most students are familiar with market segmentation as it relates to geographic (specific place-based marketing) and demographic (specific data gathered through secondary research sources relating to age, income, education level, family status, etc.). Psychographic segmentation however, examines consumers in the context of their motivations, their values, their interests, their passions, their lifestyle choices, and even the kind of media they consume. One of the most widely used systems to classify people based on psychographics is the VALS (Values, Attitudes, and Lifestyles) framework. Using VALS to combine psychographics with demographic information such as marital status, education level, and income provide a better understanding of consumers.

The Newest Market Segment You Never Knew Existed: "PANKs"

"Professional Aunt, No Kids" is considered a new and attractive market segment.

1

Demographic and psychographic characteristics of PANKs from the report include:

- In the US, there are 18.4 million PANKs aged 20-50 (roughly equals more than a quarter of all American women in that age group)
- Four in five PANKs are aged 33-52; half are 38-47 years of age
- Significant social and economic influence
- Close relationships with children of friends and/or relatives
- More likely to be college educated (74 per cent); 3 times as likely to have earned a master's degree
- 47 per cent of PANKs own their own home
- Affluent and generous gift-givers (collectively spend $61 billion on children in their lives, a figure that excludes occasional items and newborn gifts)
- 63 per cent have contributed to a niece's or nephew's education

What are PANKs spending money on? Travel is by far the biggest expense, followed by food and beverage, entertainment, toys and games, and apparel. "Adventure" days and big-ticket gifts also amount to large expenditures by loving Aunts.

Notkin segments PANKs further by identifying, "Aunts by Relations" (93 per cent) and "Aunts by Choice" (57 per cent), all of whom rank participation in a child's life of high importance. In 2013, Euromonitor reported that as of 2010, 42.6 per cent of women in the U.S. between 15-44 were childless (up from 40.1 per cent in 2002): while some women are childless by circumstance, many women are holding off having children (or choosing not to at all) until later in life.

Marketers yet to heed Notkin's advice and actively target PANKs are potentially ignoring this large and growing market segment. Her recommendations on how to engage this market includes:

- Recognizing the value of "Generation PANK" as influential women in children's lives
- While they may be secondary caregivers, PANKs are often the primary gift-givers
- Education is a priority for PANKs: these highly educated women are also contributing to their loved one's future educational needs
- Most PANKs want to be moms one day

2

1.
Consider a relatively new market segment, Professional Aunt, No Kids (or "PANKs"—a term coined by Savvy Auntie founder Melanie Notkin) discussed in a 2018 report by Melanie Notkin, founder of SAVVY AUNTIE. Notkin's research provides ample evidence that PANKs are both a growing and substantial market segment, mainly characterized by a high disposable income with considerably fewer expenses than if they had children of their own.
2. A wise marketer will recognize both the value and potential in a growing and substantial market segment, even one that may be dismissed, ignored, or not taken seriously by others.

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BRANDING

A **brand** consists of any name, term, design, style, words, symbols or any other feature that distinguishes the goods and services of one seller from another. A brand also distinguishes one product from another in the eyes of the customer. All of its elements (i.e., logo, colour, shape, letters, images) work as a psychological trigger or stimulus that causes an association to all other thoughts we have about this brand. Jingles, celebrities, and catchphrases are also oftentimes considered brands.

The word “brand” is derived from the Old Norse ‘brand’ meaning “to burn,” which refers to the practice of producers burning their mark (or brand) onto their products. Italians are considered among the first to use brands in the form of watermarks on paper in the 1200s. However, in mass-marketing, this concept originated in the 19th century with the introduction of packaged goods.

During the Industrial Revolution, the production of many household items, such as soap, was moved from local communities to centralized factories to be mass-produced and sold to the wider market. When shipping their items, factories branded their *logo* or insignia on the barrels used, thereby extending the meaning of “brand” to that of trademark. This enabled the packaged goods manufacturers to communicate that their products should be trusted as much as local competitors. Campbell’s Soup, Coca-Cola, Juicy Fruit gum, Aunt Jemima, and Quaker Oats were among the first products to be “branded.”

It'll tickle
Yore Innards
Friendliest drink
on earth
DRINK
Coca-Cola
Coke
TAKE HOME
A CARTON
IN BOTTLES
Embossed
Tin Signs
$24.99ea.
Go refreshed
Drink
Delicious and
Refreshing
ICE COLD
SOLD HERE
Pause
Refresh
PEPSI
HEINZ
TOMATO
KETCHUP

The Coca-Cola logo is an example of a widely-recognized trademark and global brand.

Branding is crucial to the success of any tangible product. In consumer markets, branding can influence whether consumers will buy the product. Branding can also help in the development of a new product by facilitating the extension of a product line or mix, through building on the consumer's perceptions of the values and character represented by the brand name.

An elegant diamond engagement ring packaged in a “robin’s egg” blue box is representative of a well-known luxurious jewellery brand retailer.

The goal when developing a brand is to create value. You do that by emulating the characteristics and values that your customers desire. Branding is present throughout everything your organization touches—it is not just a logo. Every design shown and communication made to the consumer are examples of branding.

Branding Attributes

Brands have intrinsic and extrinsic attributes. **Intrinsic attributes** refer to functional characteristics of the brand: its shape, performance, and physical capacity (e.g. Gillette razors shave unwanted hair and are able to do so more closely than most products in their product class because of their curved shape). Should any of these attributes be changed, they will not function in the same way or be the same product.

Examples of **extrinsic attributes** are features like the price of the Gillette razors, their packaging, the Gillette brand name, and mechanisms that enable consumers to form associations that give meaning to the brand. For example, it can appear more desirable because David Beckham, who is a brand himself, advertises it.

Some refer to a brand's function as the creation and communication of a multidimensional character of a product—one that is not easily copied and damaged by competitors' efforts.

Brands have different elements, namely brand personality (functional abilities), brand skill (its fundamental traits—e.g. Chanel No 5 is seen as sexy) and brand relationships (with buyers) or brand magic. These elements are what give the brand added value.

Marketing and advertising are about selling your products and services. Branding is about selling everything associated with your organization . The consumer perception of brands is brand knowledge: **brand awareness**, recognition and recall, and brand image denote how consumers perceive a brand based on quality and attitudes towards it and what stays in their memory.

Successful Brand Strategies

A successful brand can create and sustain a strong, positive, and lasting impression in the mind of a consumer. Brands provide external cues to taste, design, performance, quality, value, and prestige if they are developed and managed properly. Brands convey positive or negative messages about a product, along with indicating the company or service to the consumer, which is a direct result of past advertising, promotion, and product reputation.

According to brand experts, marketers should be paying attention to the associations consumers develop in connection to a brand. **Brand associations** are considered to be anything (e.g., sounds, smells, words, and images) that can be linked to a brand and is held in memory by consumers. Brand associations can be positive or negative depending on a consumer's direct experiences or impressions of a brand. Low and Lamb Jr (2000) tell us that brand associations are critical for marketers because they help establish differentiation, market position, and brand strategies including product line extensions. A successful organization also recognizes that brand associations are made at each point of contact: customer service calls; greetings from a receptionist; conversations with a sales person. Each of these touch points leaves a lasting impression on a consumer and can be held in memory for a long time. For that reason, an organization's brand strategy should consider the impact employees at all levels will have on brand associations.

Learn more about how attributes, benefits, values, culture, personality, and the user all factored into a brand strategy. The example below has been designed for automobile brand, Mercedes Benz: how might you apply a different brand to these 6 factors?

Six Levels of Meaning in a Brand Strategy

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=97#h5p-10

- Attributes: A brand's set of attributes communicates to its audience how the brand should be perceived and positioned.
  The Mercedes-Benz brand, for example, suggests expensive, well-built, well-engineered, durable, high-prestige automobiles.
- Benefits: A brand's set of attributes must be translated into both functional and emotional benefits for the consumer.
  For some drivers, purchasing a Mercedes gives them a personal sense of success, accomplishment, and pride.
- Values: Consumers seek brands with attributes that align with their own set of personal values.
  Mercedes stands for high performance, safety, and prestige.
- Culture: A set of brand attributes can communicate and represent a broader set of cultural characteristics that are meaningful to consumers.
  Mercedes represents German culture and thereby represents cultural characteristics of organization, efficiency, and high quality.
- Personality: Over time, a brand can project its own distinguishable kind of personality. Some brands may be "quirky" or "casual," "edgy" or "intense".
  Mercedes' personality may be described as sophisticated, serious, buttoned-up, and achievement-oriented.
- User: Every brand is designed with a particular type of user in mind: through its various attributes, a brand suggests who that user might be and what makes them attracted to the brand.
  A Mercedes-Benz driver strives to be taken seriously in everything they do. They approach their work with a growth-mentality and are committed to being successful, hard-working, and results-oriented.

Benefits of a Brand

A brand is the personality that identifies a product, service or company (name, term, sign, symbol, design, or combination thereof); it also represents a relationship to key constituencies: customers, staff, partners, investors etc. Proper branding can yield higher product sales, and higher sales of products associated with the brand (or brand association). For example, a customer who loves Pillsbury biscuits (and trusts the brand) is more likely to try other products the company offers, such as chocolate chip cookies.

Why Be Generic When You Can Be Branded?

Consumers may view branding as an aspect of products or services, as it often serves to denote certain attractive qualities or characteristics. From the perspective of brand owners, branded products or services also command higher prices. Where two products resemble each other, but one of the products has no associated branding (such as a generic, store-branded product), people may often select the more expensive branded product on the basis of the quality or reputation of the brand or brand owner. Benefits of good brand recognition include facilitating of new product acceptance, enabling market share penetration by advertising, and resisting price erosion.

Some people distinguish the psychological aspect of brand associations (e.g., thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, experiences, beliefs, attitudes, etc.) that become tied to the brand from the experiential aspect—the sum of all points of contact with the brand, otherwise known as **brand experience**. Brand experience is a brand's action perceived by a person. The psychological aspect, sometimes referred to as the **brand image**, is a symbolic construct created within the minds of people, consisting of all the information and expectations associated with a product, service, or company providing them .

Effective branding of a product also enables the consumer to easily identify the product because the features and benefits have been communicated effectively. This will increase the probability that the product will be accessible and therefore purchased and consumed. Dunkin' Donuts (*rebranded now as just, "Dunkin'"*), for example, is a brand that has an established logo and imagery that is familiar to most consumers. The vivid colors and image of a DD cup are easily recognized and distinguished from competitors.

Branding helps create loyalty, decreases the risk of losing market share to the competition by establishing a differential advantage, and allow premium pricing that is acceptable by the consumer because of the perceived value of the brand. Good branding also allows for effective targeting and positioning. For example, Adidas is a brand known its athletic and fashionable clothing, sporting equipment, and footwear. Adidas has a global brand community due to its established global branding that communicates value.

The Adidas logo is widely recognized around the world for sports apparel, clothing, and footwear.

Brand Loyalty

In marketing, **brand loyalty** refers to a consumer's commitment to repurchase or otherwise continue using a particular brand by repeatedly buying a product or service. The American Marketing Association ("AMA") defines brand loyalty as: "[t]he situation in which a consumer generally buys the same manufacturer-originated product or service repeatedly over time rather than buying from multiple suppliers within the category" (MBN, n.d.). This is expressed as a form of "habit-buying" where consumers purchase the same brand due to a "lack of dissatisfaction" (MBN, n.d.). Brand loyalty, however, is not just a form of habit-buying, but also the result of the relationship consumers build with a brand resulting in repeat and dedicated purchases that provide a deeper sense of personal fulfillment and satisfaction.

Aside from a consumer's willingness or even desire to repurchase a brand, true brand loyalty exists when a consumer is committed to the brand, and when a consumer has a high relative attitude toward the brand, which is then exhibited through repurchase behaviour. For example, if Micah has brand loyalty to Company A, they will purchase Company A's products even if Company B's products are cheaper and/or of a higher quality.

Brand loyalty is viewed as a multidimensional construct, determined by several distinct psychological processes, such as the customers' perceived value, brand trust, satisfaction, repeat purchase behaviour, and commitment. Commitment and repeat purchase behaviour are considered as necessary conditions for brand loyalty, followed by perceived value, satisfaction, and brand trust.

Philip Kotler (2016) defines four customer-types that exhibit similar patterns of behaviour:

- *Hardcore Loyals*, who buy the brand all the time;
- *Split Loyals*, loyal to two or three brands;
- *Shifting Loyals*, moving from one brand to another;
- *Switchers*, with no loyalty (possibly "deal-prone," constantly looking for bargains, or "vanity prone," looking for something different).

The benefits of brand loyalty are longer tenure (or staying a customer for longer), and lower sensitivity to price. Recent research found evidence that longer-term customers were indeed less sensitive to price increases. According to Andrew Ehrenberg, consumers buy "portfolios of brands." They switch regularly between brands, often because they simply want a change. Thus, "brand penetration" or "brand share" reflects only a statistical chance that the majority of customers will buy that brand next time as part of a portfolio of brands. It does not guarantee that they will stay loyal.

By creating promotions and loyalty programs that encourage the consumer to take some sort of action, companies are building brand loyalty by offering more than just an advertisement. Offering incentives like big prizes creates an environment in which customers see the advertiser as more than just the advertiser. Individuals are far more likely to come back to a company that uses interesting promotions or loyalty programs than a company with a static message of "buy our brand because we're the best."

Branding Beyond Consumerism

Branding is a dirty word for many activists, but it really just means "the set of expectations, memories, stories, and relationships that, taken together, account for a consumer's decision to choose one product or service over another" (Godin, 2009). If we take branding out of the realm of consumption and into the interplay of ideas in the public sphere, then we see that the tools of branding can be used for more than just selling soap.

Three important points to keep in mind about branding:

1. *Branding isn't inherently "corporate."* Branding is really nothing more than a set of proven principles for associating, in the collective imagination, a certain word, phrase or image with a set of emotions or ideas. There's nothing inherently capitalist about that. Corporations use branding because it works. Anti-corporate activists can use it, too.
2. *Branding can make the difference between success and failure.* Every movement wants its message to be heard, but simply being right won't sell your ideas. The human mind needs to be persuaded.
3. *There are copious examples of movements using branding effectively.* In the '90s, for instance, an adherence to a certain aesthetic helped unify the Otpor! youth movement that swept Serbia and ousted Slobodan Miloševic.

Whatever the context, if you craft your message for your intended audience, then that audience will want to know more. It's as simple as engaging people in a dialogue that appeals to them. If they feel you aren't talking to them, they'll ignore you — or worse, work against you.

You'll be branded whether you like it or not, so be proactive. Even conspicuously "unbranded" campaigns have a brand. Despite its efforts to avoid defining itself, the Occupy movement ended up with an effective brand when the "99%" meme organically emerged as the touchstone for people within and outside the movement.

If you decline to brand yourself, you leave an opening for other people — including enemies — to brand you instead. Operating within someone else's frame is always more difficult than operating within a frame that you yourself have set. Think of your group's brand as water spewing out of a hose. You can either leave the hose on the ground, or you can pick it up and direct its flow. Either way, the water continues to flow — and if you don't pick up the hose, someone else will!

Branding is an opportunity to shape your message and ultimately use the power of that message, its meaning, and its delivery to win the war of ideas. There's no such thing as an unbranded campaign or movement — though there are plenty of examples of poorly branded ones. *Brand or be branded!*

Branding doesn't come without controversy. While some brands may prefer to "play it safe," other brands recognize the importance of standing up for what is good and humane in the world. Nike chose to make its views and values very public when the brand aligned itself with American Civil rights Activist and football quarterback, Colin Kaepernick. Explore the branding implications of this endorsement more in the student op-ed below.

Student Op-Ed: Nike's Endorsement of Colin Kaepernick

Nike is a brand recognized globally. The company is a cultural phenomenon and has made a big impact on sports and athletic wear. The Nike "swoosh" can be seen in every major league sport. And because of its enormous worldwide influence, being chosen to represent the brand is a call that every athlete hopes to receive.

In 2016, Colin Kaepernick, who was at the time the quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, refused to stand for the American national anthem in protest of racial discrimination in America (Mathers, 2019). This led to many other high-profile athletes kneeling during the American national anthem, and eventually high school students began to as well.

Controversy followed Kaepernick as the NFL began to voice their disapproval of his stance. US President Donald Trump himself took to Twitter to reprimand athletes who did not want to stand during the national anthem. Kaepernick continued to protest for the rest of the season and was criticized by fans and NFL sponsors alike. Though a competent and admired player, in 2017 he was not signed to play for the following season.

In 2018, Nike signed Kaepernick to be the face of its newest, "Just Do It" campaign. This was met with significant backlash and many opposing consumers took to the internet to show videos of them defacing their Nike apparel. Despite some consumer backlash, Nike's stocks went up 5 per cent after signing Kaepernick and their online revenue was up by 31 per cent (Kelleher, 2018).

Undoubtedly Nike took a risk by signing Kaepernick: they knew this endorsement deal with alienate a portion of their consumer market. What Nike also knew was that this decision would benefit them far more in the long-run by associating the brand with an influential public sports figure like Coin Kaepernick.

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CHAPTER REFLECTIONS

Continue Learning

1. Find an example of a brand actively targeting the "PANKs" market segment. What features exist in this brand's marketing (e.g. commercials, ads, imagery, messaging) indicate that this target market consists of professional women without children of their own?
2. Consider how Dove's video titled "Crown" (featuring Kelly Rowland), shares with us how young girls' self-concept is shaped by their physical characteristics—in this case, specifically their hair.
3. Breaking through the media mediocrity that all too often depicts women as subjects of sexual desire or commanders of a busy household, JP Morgan delivers a highly-contextualized ad that centres tennis champion, equality advocate, business mogul, and mom, Serena Williams, that depicts high degrees of self-complexity. Discuss this video in the context of "the self" and the message it is sending to the audience.
4. What does it say about our culture and society when the commercials like the one created for Lane Bryant was refused airing on a major network television channel because it was deemed "unfit and inappropriate" and had failed to comply with "decency guidelines"? Would this be the the case if the models were equally as gorgeous but not plus-sized? What connections can we make between this advertisement and what we understand about self-esteem?
5. Car company "Buick" has created a series of advertisements that depict the ongoing tension and interaction among our ego, id, and superego. Watch some of these commercials and discuss how these Freudian concepts are represented.
6. In 2019, Peloton released a commercial featuring "Grace from Boston" that proceeded to fire up much debate on social media channels. What do experts in psychological science have to say about sex roles? Explore this Psychology Today analysis of sex roles in advertising and discuss other related themes (e.g. self-esteem) we discuss in consumer behaviour.
7. Using Erik Erikson's Psychological Stages of Development, find examples of marketing strategies (products and promotions) that align to the different stages.
8. This chapters explores ideas related to self concept, self esteem, real & ideal selves, and the looking glass self. Each of these impact our decisions as consumers since we are so often looking to purchase items that fulfill our sense of "self" and shape our own self concept. With that in mind, consider how DOVE engages in advertising that speaks to these self-concept terms. What is DOVE's intention in focusing its marketing messages on self-concept instead of say, product attributes?

    ◦ Dove—Beauty Sketches
    ◦ Dove—Evolution
    ◦ Dove—Onslaught

TOPIC 8. ATTITUDES AND ATTITUDE CHANGE

Learning Objectives

In this section, we will learn about **attitudes** and how marketers design strategies to strengthen consumers' attitudes or change attitudes to favour their marketing purposes.

Upon completing this section, students should:

1. Define the meaning of "attitudes" and summarize its key features.
2. Identify strategies used to change attitudes.
3. Explain the relationship between "involvement" and "attitudes."
4. Identify ways in which marketers can use persuasion to form or change consumer attitudes.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=102#h5p-11

- ABCs of Attitudes: The three components to an attitude are, A=Affect (how we feel about something); B=Behaviour (how we act towards something); and C=Cognition (what we think about something).Attitudes: The positive or negative, long-lasting evaluations we have regarding people and things.
- Balance theory: Fritz Heider's Balance Theory is a framework that can predict attitude and behavioural change. In marketing, this framework demonstrates the importance of consistency (balance) within the triad, and how consumers will seek to harmonize their values, beliefs, and perceptions when they experience cognitive inconsistencies.
- Central route to persuasion: This aspect of the Elaboration Likelihood Model identifies that messages requiring extensive mental processing are more likely to result in long-term attitude changes, especially with an audience who is motivated and highly involved with the subject/topic.
- Cognitive dissonance: A type of cognitive inconsistency, this term describes the discomfort consumers may feel when their beliefs, values, attitudes, or perceptions are inconsistent or contradictory to their original belief or understanding. Consumers with cognitive dissonance related to a purchasing decision will often seek to resolve this internal turmoil they are experiencing by returning the product or finding a way to justify it and minimizing their sense of buyer's remorse.
- Descriptive norms: While norms give us a sense of how we might behave in accordance with society, descriptive norms refer to our perception of how people actually behave.
- Elaboration likelihood model: This models examines two different ways persuasion can be achieved (central route; peripheral route) depending on how motivated the audience is by the message and how much thinking (mental processing) needs to be done with respect to the contents of the message.
- Halo effect: When we experience one positive trait about a person we may assume other positive features or traits as well.
- Match-up hypothesis: The degree to which a source and a brand are objectively perceived as a "good match" because the source's image and the brand's position are a good fit and logically aligned.
- Multi-attribute attitude model: This model provides a framework that can be used to measure consumers' attitudes towards specific products or services. The model identifies how consumer attitudes are informed by measuring and evaluating the attitudes of a product; the beliefs about those attributes; and the relative importance we give those attributes.

- Norms: Norms can be considered unspoken rules that members of a society follow because they represent what is good and/or right and they inform us on how we should behave.
- Peripheral route to persuasion: This aspect of the Elaboration Likelihood Model identifies that messages requiring minimal mental processing result in short-term attitude changes, especially with an audience who is not motivated and has low involvement with the subject/topic.
- Persuasion: In marketing, persuasion is seen a process of creating messages that will change the beliefs, attitudes, and/or behaviours of a target audience (e.g. consumers).
- Principle of attitude consistency: This theory comes into effect when there is strong alignment among the ABC's of attitude: the relationship between what we feel (A), think (C), and how we act (B) are consistent and in close relation to one another.
- Self-determination theory: This theory examines how our motivations and personality (internalized factors) inform our attitudes and behaviour in the absence of external influences (e.g. subjective norms, which contrasts the theory of planned behaviour).
- Social norms: Accepted informal group rules and standards that guide our behaviour. Social norms generalize the accepted way of thinking, feeling, and behaving in a way that our groups support.
- Source: In marketing, the source is often depicted as a spokesperson or representative of a brand or company and responsible for communicating messages about the brand to consumers.
- Source attractiveness: The perceived social value of the source.
- Source credibility: The perceived objectivity and trustworthiness of a source.
- Star power: This term speaks to the influence celebrities (and other types of famous people, such as athletes) have on our consumer decision making. A brand that is promoted and represented by a well-known (and adored celebrity), consumers who have a positive attitude towards that celebrity are more likely to believe in the brand as well.
- Subjective norms: The belief that you have the support and approval of the people important to you to carry out an action or behave in a particular way.
- Theory of planned behaviour: This theory suggests that our deep beliefs and values play a pivotal role in creating our attitudes and predicting our behaviour. When we combine a strong attitude with subjective norms and with our belief that we can perform a particular behaviour, these three things will predict our actual behaviour.
- Warm-glow effect: The personal satisfaction we feel in engaging in “good acts” that help others. This effect may explain why some people behave altruistically (in charity of others) but it fails to capture the extent of the impact our actions have on others (e.g. whether or not our actions are meaningful and long-lasting). For this reason, warm-glow may be described as a sort of “selfish pleasure.”

UNDERSTANDING ATTITUDES

Although we might use the term in a different way in our everyday life (e.g., "Hey, he's really got an *attitude*!"), social psychologists reserve the term **attitude** to refer to our *relatively enduring evaluation of something, where the something is called the attitude object*. The attitude object might be a person, a product, or a social group (Albarracín, Johnson, & Zanna, 2005; Wood, 2000).

When we say that attitudes are evaluations, we mean that they involve a preference for or against the attitude object, as commonly expressed in terms such as *prefer*, *like*, *dislike*, *hate*, and *love*. When we express our attitudes—for instance, when we say, "I like swimming," "I hate snakes," or "I love my parents" —we are expressing the relationship (either positive or negative) between the self and an attitude object. Statements such as these make it clear that attitudes are an important part of the self-concept.

Every human being holds thousands of attitudes, including those about family and friends, political figures, abortion rights, terrorism, preferences for music, and much more. Each of our attitudes has its own unique characteristics, and no two attitudes come to us or influence us in quite the same way. Research has found that some of our attitudes are inherited, at least in part, via genetic transmission from our parents (Olson, Vernon, Harris, & Jang, 2001). Other attitudes are learned mostly through direct and indirect experiences with the attitude objects (De Houwer, Thomas, & Baeyens, 2001). We may like to ride roller coasters in part because our genetic code has given us a thrill-loving personality and in part because we've had some really great times on roller coasters in the past. Still other attitudes are learned via the media (Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2003; Levina, Waldo, & Fitzgerald, 2000) or through our interactions with friends (Poteat, 2007). Some of our attitudes are shared by others (most of us like sugar, fear snakes, and are disgusted by cockroaches), whereas other attitudes—such as our preferences for different styles of music or art—are more individualized.

The Purpose of Attitudes

Human beings hold attitudes because they are *useful*. Particularly, our attitudes enable us to determine, often very quickly and effortlessly, which behaviours to engage in, which people to approach or avoid, and even which products to buy (Duckworth, Bargh, Garcia, & Chaiken, 2002; Maio & Olson, 2000). You can imagine that making quick decisions about what to avoid or approach has had substantial value in our evolutionary experience.

For example:

- Snake = bad → run away
- Blueberries = good → eat

Attitudes are important because they frequently (but not always) *predict behaviour*. If we know that a person has a more positive attitude toward Frosted Flakes than toward Cheerios, then we will naturally predict that they will buy more of the former when they get to the market. If we know that Amara is madly in love with Leila, then we will not be surprised when she proposes marriage. Because attitudes often predict behaviour, people who wish to change behaviour frequently try to change attitudes through the use of *persuasive communications*.

Shifting Consumers' Attitudes

A few years ago, KFC began running ads to the effect that fried chicken was healthy — until the U.S. Federal Trade Commission told the company to stop. Wendy's slogan that its products are "way better than fast food" is another example. Fast food has a negative connotation, so Wendy's is trying to get consumers to think about its offerings as being better.

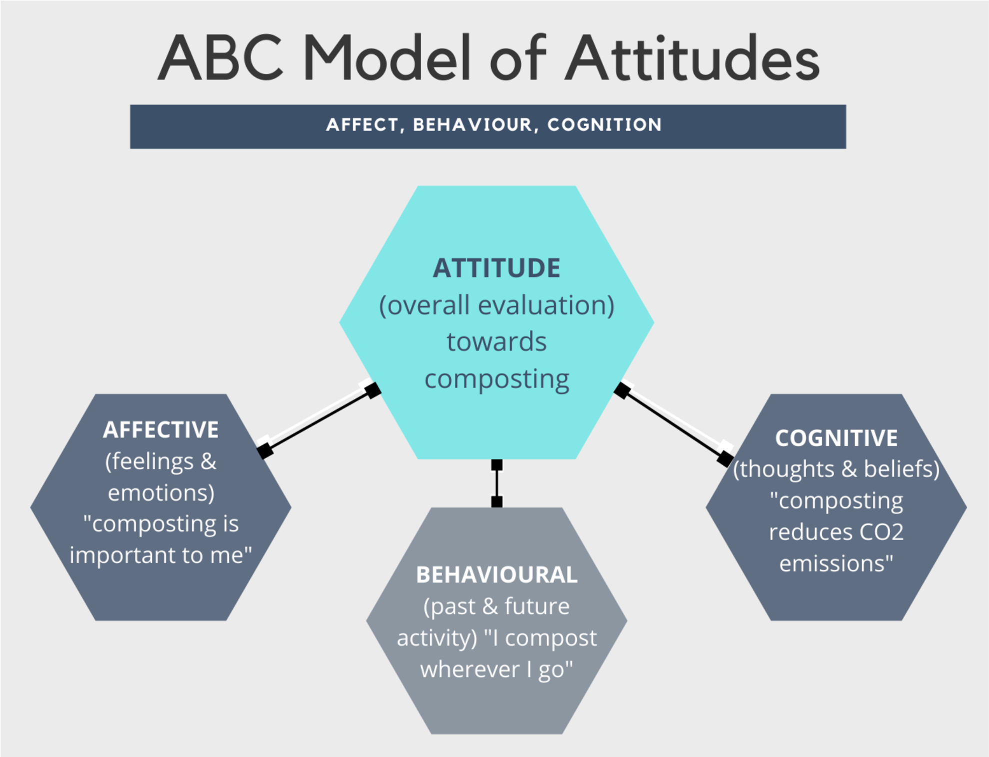
An example of a shift in consumers' attitudes occurred when the taxpayer-paid government bailouts of big banks that began in 2008 provoked the wrath of Americans, creating an opportunity for small banks not involved in the credit bailout and subprime mortgage mess. The Worthington National Bank, a small bank in Fort Worth, Texas, ran billboards reading: "Did Your Bank Take a Bailout? We didn't." Another read: "Just Say NO to Bailout Banks. Bank Responsibly!" The Worthington Bank received tens of millions in new deposits soon after running these campaigns (Mantone, 2009).

The ABC's of Attitudes

Our attitudes are made up of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. Consider an environmentalist's attitude toward recycling, which is probably very positive:

- *In terms of affect: They feel happy when they recycle.*
- *In terms of behavior: They regularly recycle their bottles and cans.*
- *In terms of cognition: They believe recycling is the responsible thing to do.*

The image below shows how a person's positive attitude towards composting would be comprised of a strong alignment among their feelings towards composting ("affect"), their actions when it comes to composting ("behaviour"), and their thoughts about composting ("knowledge").


ABC Model of Attitudes
AFFECT, BEHAVIOUR, COGNITION
ATTITUDE
(overall evaluation) towards composting
AFFECTIVE
(feelings & emotions) "composting is important to me"
BEHAVIOURAL
(past & future activity) "I compost wherever I go"
COGNITIVE
(thoughts & beliefs) "composting reduces CO2 emissions"

An overall positive attitude towards composting is supported by the alignment of our feelings, our behaviours, and our thoughts about composting. The ABC's together form the "DNA" of an attitude.

Affect, behaviour, and cognition can be defined as follows:

The ABC's of Attitudes

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https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=106#h5p-12

- Affect: Our feelings and emotions that help us express how we *feel* about a person/event/object
- Behaviour: What we intend to *do* or how we intent to *act* regarding the person/event/object
- Cognition: Our *thoughts* are *beliefs* about a person/event/object

Response Hierarchies: Which Comes First?

Although most attitudes are determined by affect, behavior, and cognition, there is nevertheless variability in this regard across people and across attitudes. Some attitudes are more likely to be based on feelings, some are more likely to be based on behaviors, and some are more likely to be based on beliefs. For example, your attitude toward chocolate ice cream is probably determined in large part by affect—although you can describe its taste, mostly you may just like it. Your attitude toward your toothbrush, on the other hand, is probably more cognitive (you understand the importance of its function). Still other of your attitudes may be based more on behavior. For example, your attitude toward note-taking during lectures probably depends, at least in part, on whether or not you regularly take notes.

Thinking, feeling, and doing can happen in any order. Psychologists originally assumed that we form attitudes through a fixed sequence of these three components: We first *think* about the object, then evaluate our *feelings* about it, and finally take *action*:

Cognition → Affect → Behaviour [**C-A-B**].

Research, however, shows that we form attitudes in different sequences based on different circumstances. If we're not very involved in or don't care much about a purchase, we may just buy a product on impulse or because we remember a catchphrase about it instead of carefully evaluating it in relation to other products. In that case, action precedes feeling and thought:

Behaviour → Affect → Cognition [**B-A-C**].

Conversely, feelings — rather than thoughts — may drive the entire decision process; our emotional reactions may drive us to buy a product simply because we like its name, its packaging design, or the brand image that ads create. In this case, we see the product, have a feeling about it, and buy it:

Affect → Behaviour → Cognition [**A-B-C**].

Involvement Levels and their Response Hierarchies

Table that lists involvement levels and respective examples

Involvement Level	Example	Response Hierarchy
High	Vacation, wedding dress, new car	C—A—B
Low	Car wash, tin foil, toilet cleaner	B—A—C
(Impulse)	Face mask, candles, computer games	A—B—C

Although most attitudes are determined by affect, behaviour, and cognition, there is nevertheless variability in this regard across people and across attitudes. Some attitudes are more likely to be based on feelings, some are more likely to be based on behaviours, and some are more likely to be based on beliefs. For example, your attitude toward chocolate ice cream is probably determined in large part by affect—although you can describe its taste, mostly you may just like it. Your attitude toward your toothbrush, on the other hand, is probably more cognitive (you understand the importance of its function). Still other of your attitudes may be based more on behaviour. For example, your attitude toward note-taking during lectures probably depends, at least in part, on whether or not you regularly take notes.

Different people may hold attitudes toward the same attitude object for different reasons. For example, some people vote for politicians because they like their policies, whereas others vote for (or against) politicians because they just like (or dislike) their public persona. Although you might think that cognition would be more important in this regard, political scientists have shown that many voting decisions are made primarily on the basis of *affect*. Indeed, it is fair to say that the affective component of attitudes is generally the strongest and most important (Abelson, Kinder, Peters, & Fiske, 1981; Stangor, Sullivan, & Ford, 1991).

Not All Attitudes Are The Same

Attitudes are also stronger when the **ABCs** of *affect, behaviour, and cognition* all align. As an example, many people's attitude toward their own nation is universally positive. They have strong positive feelings about their country, many positive thoughts about it, and tend to engage in behaviours that support it. The same extends to products that are made in our home countries: consumers tend to have a more positive attitude towards items that are "made local" and as a result may be more likely to purchase them over others.

Other attitudes are less strong because the affective, cognitive, and behavioural components are each somewhat different (Thompson, Zanna & Griffin, 1995). Your cognitions toward physical exercise may be positive — you believe that regular physical activity is good for your health. On the other hand, your affect may be negative — you may resist exercising because you prefer to engage in tasks that provide more immediate rewards. Consequently, you may not exercise as often as you believe you ought to. These inconsistencies among the components of your attitude make it less strong than it would be if all the components lined up together.

Consider making a list of where your consumer-based attitude alignment is strong (affect, behaviour, and cognition all align) and where your attitude may be inconsistent among the ABC's (e.g. affect may be low but cognition is strong).

The Principle of Attitude Consistency

The **Principle of attitude consistency** (that *for any given attitude object, the ABCs of affect, behaviour, and cognition are normally in line with each other*) thus predicts that our attitudes (for instance, as measured via a self-report measure) are likely to *guide behaviour*. Supporting this idea, meta-analyses have found that there is a significant and substantial positive correlation among the different components of attitudes, and that attitudes expressed on self-report measures do predict behaviour (Glasman & Albarracín, 2006).

Looking at this through the consumer behaviour lens, we can use this principle to identify that if a consumer *feels* strongly about sustainability in the production, consumption, and disposal of consumer products, that they will *act* accordingly: they will buy sustainably produced products then consume (and dispose of) them in a way that minimizes their negative impact to land, water, and air.

Normative Influences

Norms can have a powerful influence on consumer attitudes & behaviour. **Norms** define how to behave in accordance with what a society has defined as good, right, and important, and most members of the society adhere to them. Formal norms are established, written rules. They are behaviours worked out and agreed upon in order to suit and serve the most people. Laws are formal norms, but so are employee manuals, college entrance exam requirements, and "no running" signs at swimming pools. *Formal norms* are the most specific and clearly stated of the various types of norms, and they are the most strictly enforced. But even formal norms are enforced to varying degrees and are reflected in cultural values.

For example, money is highly valued in Canada, so monetary crimes are punished. It's against the law to rob a bank, and banks go to great lengths to prevent such crimes. People safeguard valuable possessions and install anti-theft devices to protect homes and cars. A less strictly enforced social norm is speeding when driving. While it's against the law to speed, driving above the speed limit or with the "flow" of traffic is common practice. And though there are laws to speeding, there are a range of enforcement in formal norms.

There are plenty of formal norms, but the list of *informal norms* — casual behaviours that are generally and widely conformed to — is longer. People learn informal norms by observation, imitation, and general socialization. Some informal norms are taught directly — "Kiss your Aunt Edna" or "Use your napkin" — while others are learned by observation, including observations of the consequences when someone else violates a norm.

Cialdini & Trost (1998) defined **social norms** as accepted group rules and standards that guide our behavior without the force of law. We can also think of norms as representing what we ought to do or the correct thing to do. They are the accepted way of thinking, feeling and behaving that the group supports. I think for most of us social norms become the most obvious when someone violates them. Have you ever been somewhere and thought, "I can't believe that person is doing that! Don't they know that isn't appropriate."? There are many rules for appropriate behavior in public spaces. Often the groups we belong to and that we value, socialize us early on what is expected and acceptable ways of thinking and behaving. It is typically only through violation of norms that we are aware of their existence.

Subjective norms refer to the degree of social pressure an individual feels regarding the performance or non-performance of a specific behaviour (Ajzen, 1988). Subjective norms are influenced by ones' perception of the beliefs based on parents, friends, partners, acquaintances and colleagues. This plays a significant factor in how people are influenced in the way they perceive behavior and views.

Descriptive norms are defined as, "the perception of what most people do in a given situation" (Burger, 2021). Most of us, most of the time, are motivated to do the right thing. If society deems that we put litter in a proper container, speak softly in libraries, and tip our waiter, then that's what most of us will do.

But sometimes it's not clear what society expects of us. In these situations, we often rely on descriptive norms (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990).

Researchers have demonstrated the power of descriptive norms in a number of areas. Homeowners reduced the amount of energy they used when they learned that they were consuming more energy than their neighbours (Schultz, Nolan, Cialdini, Goldstein, & Griskevicius, 2007). Undergraduates selected the healthy food option when led to believe that other students had made this choice (Burger et al., 2010). Hotel guests were more likely to reuse their towels when a hanger in the bathroom told them that this is what most guests did (Goldstein, Cialdini, & Griskevicius, 2008). And more people began using the stairs instead of the elevator when informed that the vast majority of people took the stairs to go up one or two floors (Burger & Shelton, 2011).

How Descriptive Norms Mislead Us

It's not always easy to obtain good *descriptive norm* information, which means we sometimes rely on a flawed notion of the norm when deciding how we should behave. A good example of how misperceived norms can lead to problems is found in research on binge drinking among college students. Excessive drinking is a serious problem on many campuses (Mita, 2009). There are many reasons why students binge drink, but one of the most important is their perception of the descriptive norm. How much students drink is highly correlated with how much they believe the average student drinks (Neighbors, Lee, Lewis, Fossos, & Larimer, 2007).

Unfortunately, students aren't always very good at making this assessment. They notice the boisterous heavy drinker at the party but fail to consider all the students not attending the party. As a result, students typically overestimate the descriptive norm for college student drinking (Borsari & Carey, 2003; Perkins, Haines, & Rice, 2005). Most students believe they consume significantly less alcohol than the norm, a miscalculation that creates a dangerous push toward more and more excessive alcohol consumption. On the positive side, providing students with accurate information about drinking norms has been found to reduce overindulgent drinking (Burger, LaSalvia, Hendricks, Mehdipour, & Neudeck, 2011; Neighbors, Lee, Lewis, Fossos, & Walter, 2009).

The Theory of Planned Behaviour

Our attitudes are not the only factor that influence our decision to act. The **theory of planned behaviour**, developed by Martin Fishbein and Izek Ajzen (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), outlines three key variables that affect the attitude-behaviour relationship:

a. *the attitude toward the behaviour* (the stronger the better)
b. *subjective norms* (the support of those we value)
c. *perceived behavioural control* (the extent to which we believe we can actually perform the behaviour).

These three factors jointly predict our intention to perform the behaviour, which in turn predicts our actual behaviour.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour In Action

The Theory of Planned Behaviour helps predict what intentions will turn into actions, and the degree of control a person has over what intentions turn into actions (Chan & Bishop; Greaves et al.).

Imagine for a moment that your friend Sharina is trying to decide whether to recycle her used laptop batteries or just throw them away.

> (a) We know that her attitude toward recycling is positive — she thinks she should do it — but we also know that recycling takes work. It's much easier to just throw the batteries away.
>
> (b) If Sharina feels strongly about the importance of recycling, and if her family and friends (*external influences in the form of subjective norms*) are also in favour of recycling, this will factor into her behavioural outcome.
>
> (c) And if Sharina has easy access to a battery recycling facility, then she will develop a strong intention to perform the behaviour and likely follow through on it.

Let's imagine another example using this model to show how it can predict attitude and outcome:

Jillian is a personal fitness trainer and is now eligible to get a vaccine for Covid-19 so she can protect herself and stop the spread to her loved ones and community.

> (a) Jillian gets a flu shot every year and is an advocate for vaccinations and immunization. Throughout flu season and the Coronavirus pandemic, Jillian always wore a mask in public.
>
> (b) Jillian's doctor, friends, family, and co-workers at the gym are equally as attentive to their health and the safety of others and will be getting vaccinated as soon as they are eligible. Jillian's community and the majority of people in her society all believe in science-based medicine.
>
> (c) It's easy to set up the vaccinate appointment: Jillian goes online, makes the reservation, then attends the appointment at the pharmacy just down the street from her. Simple.

Jillian's attitude (a), the subjective norm (b), and the perceived behavioural control (c) all support her getting the Covid-19 vaccine much more likely.

Self-Determination & Intrinsic Motivation in Attitudes

The **self-determination theory** theory describes motivated behaviour as part of a continuum that ranges from autonomous to controlled actions (Huffman, 2014). Unlike the theory of planned behaviour that examines subjective norms (*external influences*) as a factor to predict behaviour, the self-determination theory focuses on motivation and personality (*internal cues*) as predictors to attitude and behaviour.

The theory proposed by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (2000) states that understanding motivation requires taking into account three basic human needs:

- *autonomy*—the need to feel free of external constraints on behavior
- *competence*—the need to feel capable or skilled
- *relatedness*—the need to feel connected or involved with others

Another intrinsic motivator is the **warm-glow effect**, which consists of the personal satisfaction and altruistic motives that benefit the well-being of others (Abbott et al.). Individuals "feel good" for partaking in pro-environmental behaviours and continue to repeat the activities regardless of extrinsic rewards (Abbott et al.). While the warm-glow effect leaves us feeling personally rewarded for "doing good," there remains much debate about whether each one of our acts of goodness has a positive and long-lasting impact.

The Four Functional Theories of Attitude

Functional theorists Katz (2008) and Smith, Bruner, & White (1956) addressed the issue of not knowing which base (affective, cognition or behaviour) was most important by looking at how the person's attitude serves them psychologically. They came up with four different functions that an attitude might serve:

1. One of the most beneficial things an attitude can do for us is to make our lives more efficient. We do not have to evaluate and process each thing we come into contact with to know if it is good (safe) or bad (threatening) (Petty, 1995). This is called the ***knowledge function*** and allows us to understand and make sense of the world. My attitude towards insects is somewhat negative. I tend to have large reactions to bites from them and although most do not bite, my immediate reaction is to avoid them if at all possible. In this way my attitude keeps me from having to evaluate every type of insect I come into contact with. Saving time and allowing me to think of other things in life (Bargh, et al.,1992). This example might have prompted you to think that this generalization could lead to discrimination and you would be correct. In an attempt to be more efficient, I am not stopping and processing every insect I come into contact with and some insects are good (safe). We will discuss how this helps explain prejudice and discrimination in a later module.
2. Our attitudes can serve an ***ego-defensive function*** which is to help us cover up things that we do not like about ourselves or help us to feel better about ourselves. You might think cheerleaders are stupid or superficial to protect yourself from feeling badly that you aren't a cheerleader. Here you defended against a threatening truth – you aren't a cheerleader which you want to be and boosted

your self-image by believing that you are better than them – you are smart and complex.

3. We can categorize some of our attitudes as serving as tools that lead us to greater rewards or help us to avoid punishments. So, individuals might have developed an attitude that having sex with many partners is bad. This has both a knowledge function and a ***utilitarian function*** by helping people avoid the societal punishment of being called promiscuous and then seeking the reward of being the kind of person that someone would take home and introduce to their parents.
4. The final function centers around the idea that some of our attitudes help us express who we are to other people, ***value-expressive function***. We see this a lot on social media. If you were to examine someone's Facebook or Instagram page you would see that their posts are full of their attitudes about life and they intentionally post certain things so that people will know who they are as a person. You might post a lot of political things and people might see you as a politically engaged person, you might post a lot about the environment and people see that you are passionate about this topic. This is who you are.

Cognitive Dissonance

Social psychologists have documented that feeling good about ourselves and maintaining positive self-esteem is a powerful motivator of human behaviour (Tavris & Aronson, 2008). Often, our behaviour, attitudes, and beliefs are affected when we experience a threat to our self-esteem or positive self-image. Psychologist Leon Festinger (1957) defined **cognitive dissonance** as psychological discomfort arising from holding two or more inconsistent attitudes, behaviours, or cognitions (thoughts, beliefs, or opinions). Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance states that when we experience a conflict in our behaviours, attitudes, or beliefs that runs counter to our positive self-perceptions, we experience psychological discomfort (dissonance). For example, if you believe smoking is bad for your health but you continue to smoke, you experience conflict between your belief and behaviour.

When we experience cognitive dissonance, we are motivated to decrease it because it is psychologically, physically, and mentally uncomfortable. We can reduce cognitive dissonance by bringing our cognitions, attitudes, and behaviours in line — that is, making them harmonious.

This sense of harmony can be achieved in different ways, such as:

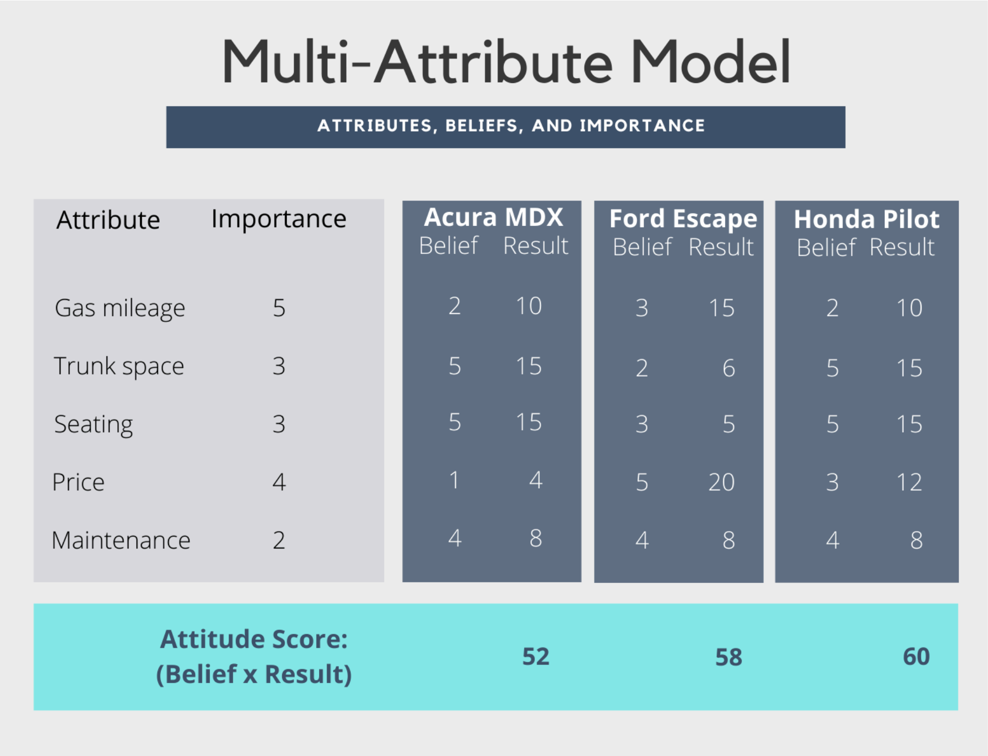
- Changing our discrepant behaviour (e.g., stop smoking);
- Changing our cognitions through rationalization or denial (e.g., telling ourselves that health risks can be reduced by smoking filtered cigarettes);
- Adding a new cognition (e.g., "Smoking suppresses my appetite so I don't become overweight, which is good for my health").

Multi-Attribute Attitude Model

Marketers desire the ability to better understand consumers' attitudes towards their products and services. However, attitudes are complex and a consumer may have a range of attitudes (*favourable and unfavourable*) towards a single product or service—not just one. In addition to the various qualities held by a product or service, consumers are also faced with the added complexity of seeking approval, whether that comes from friends, family, or society. Attitude models are designed to help identify the different factors that would influence a consumer's evaluation of attitude objects.

Due to the complexity surrounding attitudes, researchers use **multi-attribute models** to explain them. Simply put, multi-attribute models say that we form attitudes about a product based on several *attributes* of that product, our *beliefs* about those attributes, and the relative *importance* we assign to those attributes.

The decision to purchase a car like an SUV offers a good illustration of how a multi-attribute model affects purchase behaviour. On the one hand, the styling and stance of a particular model might evoke feelings of power, confidence, and ruggedness. The vehicle's high ground clearance and roomy back might be great for the consumer's intended camping trips. On the other hand, the brand could make the consumer ill at ease — perhaps a friend had a bad experience with that car maker. And the more rational side of a consumer might balk at the high cost and poor gas mileage. Yet the vehicle looks great, so the consumer isn't sure. And, regardless of their personal feelings about the vehicle, the consumer may also factor in social pressure: will their friends criticize them as a wasteful gas-guzzler if they buy an SUV instead of a compact hybrid? Will they buy or won't they? The decision depends on how the buyer combines and weights these positive and negative attitude components.



Multi-Attribute Model

ATTRIBUTES, BELIEFS, AND IMPORTANCE

Attribute	Importance	**Acura MDX**		**Ford Escape**		**Honda Pilot**	
		Belief	Result	Belief	Result	Belief	Result
Gas mileage	5	2	10	3	15	2	10
Trunk space	3	5	15	2	6	5	15
Seating	3	5	15	3	5	5	15
Price	4	1	4	5	20	3	12
Maintenance	2	4	8	4	8	4	8
Attitude Score: (Belief x Result)			**52**		**58**		**60**

The Multi-Attribute Model can be used to calculate an Attitude Score by evaluating the importance of key attributes featured across different products or brands.

A student might have a range of attitudes towards different brands of laptop computers. There are various features each brand is known for (speed, weight, memory) but in addition to the functional attributes, a student may also want to evaluate the brand appeal for each one. The following table provides students with a re-usable template to build their own multi-attribute model for any range of brands, products, or services they might want to evaluate using this model.

Multi-attribute model for laptop computers

The multi-attribute model used to evaluate laptop computers showing Apple's MacBook as the clear favourite

		Beliefs		
Attribute	**Importance**	**MacBook**	**Windows Surface**	**Acer**
Low Price	5	1	2	3
Processing Memory (RAM)	4	3	2	3
Processing speed	3	2	3	4
Brand appeal	5	5	2	1
Light weight	2	4	5	1
		56	47	46

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CHANGING ATTITUDES

Every day we are bombarded by advertisements of every sort. The goal of these ads is to sell us cars, computers, video games, clothes, and even political candidates. The ads appear on billboards, website popup ads, buses, TV infomercials, and…well, you name it! It's been estimated that over $500 billion is spent annually on advertising worldwide (Johnson, 2013).

There is substantial evidence that advertising is effective in changing attitudes. After the R. J. Reynolds Company started airing its Joe Camel ads for cigarettes on TV in the 1980s, Camel's share of cigarette sales to children increased dramatically. But persuasion can also have more positive outcomes. For instance, a review of the research literature indicates that mass-media anti-smoking campaigns are associated with reduced smoking rates among both adults and youth (Friend & Levy, 2001). Persuasion is also used to encourage people to donate to charitable causes, to volunteer to give blood, and to engage in healthy behaviors.

Persuasion

Persuasion has been defined as "the process by which a message induces change in beliefs, attitudes, or behaviours" (Myers, 2011). Persuasion can take many forms. It may, for example, differ in whether it targets public compliance or private acceptance, is short-term or long-term, whether it involves slowly escalating commitments or sudden interventions and, most of all, in the benevolence of its intentions. When persuasion is well-meaning, we might call it education. When it is manipulative, it might be called mind control (Levine, 2003).

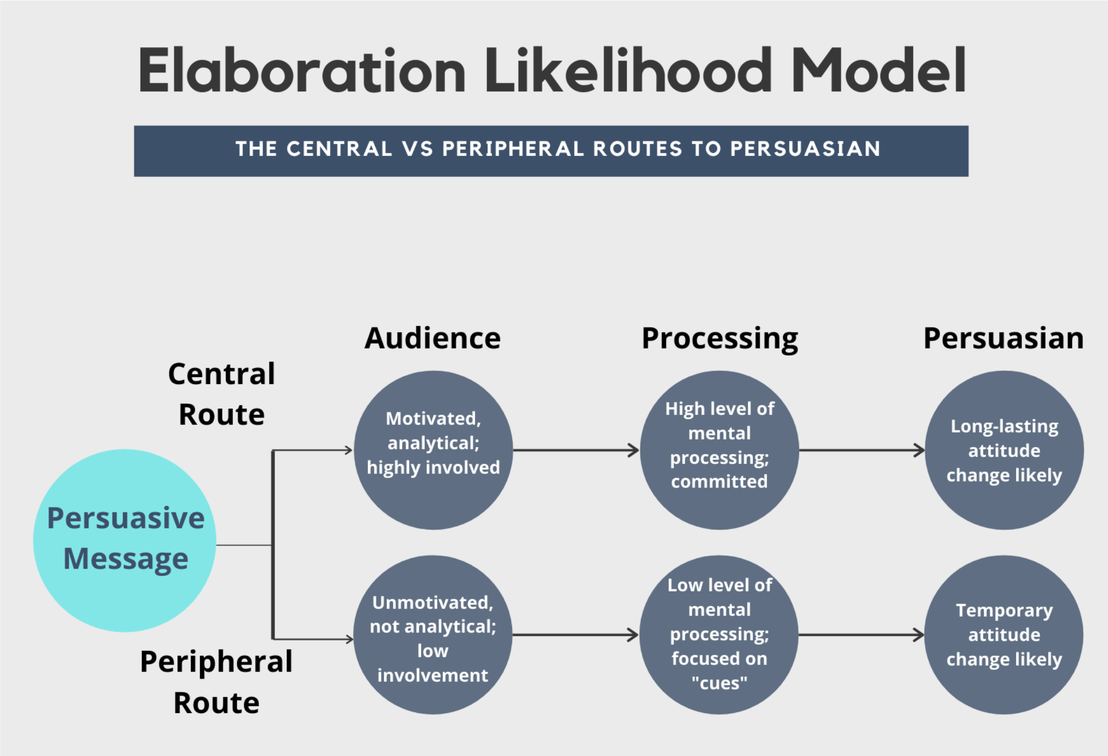
Marketing Context: The Effective Use of Persuasion by Apple to Drive Sales

On January 9, 2007, Steve Jobs, the enigmatic co-founder and CEO of Apple, Inc., introduced the first iPhone to the world. The device quickly revolutionized the smartphone industry and changed what consumers came to expect from their phones. In the years since, smartphones have changed from being regarded as status symbols (Apple sold close to 1.4 million iPhones during their first year on the market) to fairly commonplace and essential tools. One out of every five people in the world now owns a smartphone, there are more smartphones in use in the world than PCs, and it is difficult for many young people to imagine how anyone ever managed to function without them. If you consider the relatively high cost of these devices, this transformation has been truly remarkable.

Much of this shift in attitude can be credited to the impressive use of tactics of persuasion employed by smartphone manufacturers like Apple and Samsung. The typical marketing campaign for a new model of an iPhone delivers a carefully crafted message that cleverly weaves together stories, visuals, and music to create an emotional experience for the viewing public. These messages are often designed to showcase the range of uses of the device and to evoke a sense of need. Apple also strives to form relationships with its customers, something that is illustrated by the fact that 86 per cent of those who purchased the iPhone 5S were upgrading from a previous model. This strategy has benefited Apple tremendously as it has sold over 400 million iPhones since 2007, making it one of the wealthiest companies in the world.

Elaboration Likelihood Model

An especially popular model that describes the dynamics of persuasion is the **elaboration likelihood model of persuasion** (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). The elaboration likelihood model considers the variables of the attitude change approach — that is, features of the source of the persuasive message, contents of the message, and characteristics of the audience are used to determine when attitude change will occur. According to the elaboration likelihood model of persuasion, there are two main routes that play a role in delivering a persuasive message: central and peripheral (see image below).


Elaboration Likelihood Model
THE CENTRAL VS PERIPHERAL ROUTES TO PERSUASIAN
Audience
Processing
Persuasian
Central Route
Persuasive Message
Motivated, analytical; highly involved
High level of mental processing; committed
Long-lasting attitude change likely
Peripheral Route
Unmotivated, not analytical; low involvement
Low level of mental processing; focused on "cues"
Temporary attitude change likely

Persuasion can take one of two paths: Central (where the audience is highly involved, prepared to engage in a high level of mental processing, and will experience a long-lasting attitude change), or peripheral (where the audience has low involvement, is more in tune with features peripheral to the core message, and only experiences a temporary attitude change).

The **central route** is logic driven and uses data and facts to convince people of an argument's worthiness. For example, a car company seeking to persuade you to purchase their model will emphasize the car's safety features and fuel economy. This is a direct route to persuasion that focuses on the quality of the information. In order for the central route of persuasion to be effective in changing attitudes, thoughts, and behaviours, the argument must be strong and, if successful, will result in lasting attitude change.

The central route to persuasion works best when the target of persuasion, or the audience, is analytical and willing to engage in processing of the information. From an advertiser's perspective, what products would be best sold using the central route to persuasion? What audience would most likely be influenced to buy the product? One example is buying a computer. It is likely, for example, that small business owners might be especially influenced by the focus on the computer's quality and features such as processing speed and memory capacity.

The **peripheral route** is an indirect route that uses peripheral cues to associate positivity with the message (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Instead of focusing on the facts and a product's quality, the peripheral route relies on association with positive characteristics such as positive emotions and celebrity endorsement. For example, having a popular athlete advertise athletic shoes is a common method used to encourage young adults to purchase the shoes. This route to attitude change does not require much effort or information processing. This method of persuasion may promote positivity toward the message or product, but it typically results in less permanent attitude or behaviour change. The audience does not need to be analytical or motivated to process the message. In fact, a peripheral route to persuasion may not even be noticed by the audience, for example in the strategy of product placement. Product placement refers to putting a product with a clear brand name or brand identity in a TV show or movie to promote the product (Gupta & Lord, 1998). For example, one season of the reality series *American Idol* prominently showed the panel of judges drinking out of cups that displayed the Coca-Cola logo. What other products would be best sold using the peripheral route to persuasion? Another example is clothing: A retailer may focus on celebrities that are wearing the same style of clothing.

Student Op-Ed: How to be a Woman (according to the Susan G. Komen Foundation)

The peripheral route to persuasion, a function of the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion, is a consumer behaviour concept that can explain how the Susan G. Komen Foundation ("Komen") and the Avon Foundation for Women ("Avon") attracted attention without providing much factual information on their goal: curing breast cancer. The peripheral route to persuasion is the cognitive path that consumers take when they rely on extraneous information that is not the actual message, such as the source of the message, the package it comes in, etc. to make a decision about how they feel about that product (Solomon, White & Dahl, 2014). These marketing tactics are designed for low-involvement processing, wherein a consumer doesn't think very much about a buying decision before making a purchase. The extraneous information, or peripheral cues, in the case of the Pink Ribbon Movement is based almost exclusively on hyperfemininity and is made to evoke strong emotions of hope and fulfillment.

In the film Pink Ribbons, Inc. (Pool, 2011), we follow Komen, a nonprofit dedicated to finding a cure for breast cancer, watching how they raise awareness for their cause. Celebrity endorsements are a popular method, using stars like Halle Berry and Christie Brinkley to promote their events. And because Komen, as depicted in the film, doesn't have a lot of information on how they're actually going to cure breast cancer, they capture their audience with the attractiveness of the information source and not the information itself. These celebrities, or "sources", fit the archetype of what the "ideal" woman should look like, and very specifically they fit the role of what a "healthy" woman should look like. And so the Komen uses their star power to not only garner attention but also promote a look that follows the brand that they've built.

Looking at Avon, a nonprofit run by the cosmetics company Avon Products, Inc., we see the same trend of using low-involvement processing. Avon uses this curated culture of "sisterhood" to promote their products, relying on the fact that their audience will feel that pressure to show their care for other women and then make the connection that supporting women means supporting the use of cosmetics. They immerse their message within the context that being pretty is related to being healthy. While this has nothing to do with finding a cure for breast cancer, it does the job of persuading the consumer to think less and act more by creating a connection that is simple and convenient.

The peripheral route is the path we take when we aren't invested in learning more about a product or service we seek to purchase. I think the popularity of the Pink Ribbon Movement is brought on through specific marketing that relies on the fact that, as a culture, we are obsessed with women's bodies. But we know so little about them that there's a limit to how we can help ourselves and other women stay healthy. I don't think indifference is the driving factor when it comes to these low-involvement purchasing situations, as much as ignorance is.

I care about finding more information about breast cancer, but I don't know where to put that energy because information is genuinely hard to find. Komen and Avon provided a place for us to put our anxiety and our grief, provided we buy into the shiny, pink package they deliver to us. With public health issues, the messages should be informational, educational, and should require a high degree of mental processing; but instead The Pink Ribbon Movement hands us an easy-to-read instruction manual that is too convenient to resist.

The Source of Persuasion: The Triad of Trustworthiness

Effective persuasion requires trusting the **source** of the communication. Studies have identified three characteristics that lead to trust: *perceived authority, honesty, and likability*.

1. ***Perceived Authority**:* From earliest childhood, we learn to rely on authority figures for sound decision making because their authority signifies status and power, as well as expertise. These two facets often work together. Authorities such as parents and teachers are not only our primary sources of wisdom while we grow up, but they control us and our access to the things we want. In addition, we have been taught to believe that respect for authority is a moral virtue. As adults, it is natural to transfer this respect to society's designated authorities, such as judges, doctors, bosses, and religious leaders. We assume their positions give them special access to information and power. Usually we are correct, so that our willingness to defer to authorities becomes a convenient shortcut to sound decision making. Uncritical trust in authority may, however, lead to bad decisions. Uncritical trust in authority can be problematic for several reasons. First, even if the source of the message is a legitimate, well-intentioned authority, they may not always be correct. Second, when respect for authority becomes mindless, expertise in one domain may be confused with expertise in general. To assume there is credibility when a successful actor promotes a cold remedy, or when a psychology professor offers his views about politics, can lead to problems. Third, the authority may not be legitimate. It is not difficult to fake a college degree or professional credential or to buy an official-looking badge or uniform.
2. ***Honesty***: Honesty is the moral dimension of trustworthiness. Persuasion professionals have long understood how critical it is to their efforts. Marketers, for example, dedicate exorbitant resources to developing and maintaining an image of honesty. A trusted brand or company name becomes a mental shortcut for consumers. It is estimated that some 50,000 new products come out each year. Forrester Research, a marketing research company, calculates that children have seen almost six million ads by the age of 16. An established brand name helps us cut through this volume of information. It signals we are in safe territory. "The real suggestion to convey," advertising leader Theodore MacManus observed in 1910, "is that the man manufacturing the product is an honest man, and the product is an honest product, to be preferred above all others" (Fox, 1997).

3. ***Likability***: People tend to favour products that are associated with people they like. This is the key ingredient to celebrity endorsements. While there are a lot of factors that can contribute to likability, being physically attractive is one of the most influential. If we know that celebrities aren't really experts, and that they are being paid to say what they're saying, why do their endorsements sell so many products? Ultimately, it is because we like them. More than any single quality, we trust people we like. The mix of qualities that make a person likable are complex and often do not generalize from one situation to another. One clear finding, however, is that physically attractive people tend to be liked more. In fact, we prefer them to a disturbing extent: Various studies have shown we perceive attractive people as smarter, kinder, stronger, more successful, more socially skilled, better poised, better adjusted, more exciting, more nurturing, and, most important, of higher moral character. All of this is based on no other information than their physical appearance (e.g., Dion, Berscheid & Walster, 1972).

When the source appears to have any or all of these characteristics, people not only are more willing to agree to their request but are willing to do so without carefully considering the facts. We assume we are on safe ground and are happy to shortcut the tedious process of informed decision making. As a result, we are more susceptible to messages and requests, no matter their particular content or how peripheral they may be.

Source Credibility

Source credibility means that consumers perceive the source (or spokesperson) as an expert who is objective and trustworthy ("I'm not a doctor, but I play one on TV"). A credible source will provide information on competing products, not just one product, to help the consumer make a more informed choice. We also see the impact of credibility in Web sites like eBay or Wikipedia and numerous blogs, where readers rate the quality of others' submissions to enable the entire audience to judge whose posts are worth reading.

Source Attractiveness

Source attractiveness refers to the source's perceived social value, not just his or her physical appearance. High social value comes partly from physical attractiveness but also from personality, social status, or similarity to the receiver. We like to listen to people who are like us, which is why "typical" consumers are effective when they endorse everyday products. So, when we think about source attractiveness, it's important to keep in mind that "attractiveness" is not just physical beauty. The advertising that is most effective isn't necessarily the one that pairs a Hollywood idol with a product. Indeed, one study found that many students were more convinced by an endorsement from a fictional fellow student than from a celebrity. As a researcher explained, “They [students] like to make sure their product is fashionable and trendy among people who resemble them, rather than approved by celebrities like David Beckham, Brad Pitt or Scarlett Johansson. So they are more influenced by an endorsement from an ordinary person like them” (“Celebrity Ads…,” 2007).

Still, all things equal, there’s a lot of evidence that physically attractive people are more persuasive. Our culture (like many others) has a bias toward good-looking people that teaches they are more likely to possess other desirable traits as well. Researchers call this the “what is beautiful is good” hypothesis (Dion et al., 1972).

Match-Up Hypothesis

For celebrity campaigns to be effective, the endorser must have a clear and popular image. In addition, the celebrity’s image and that of the product they endorse should be similar — researchers refer to this as the **match-up hypothesis** (Kamins, 1990; Basil, 1994). A market research company developed one widely used measure called the *Q-score* (Q stands for quality) to decide if a celebrity will make a good endorser. The score includes level of familiarity with a name and the number of respondents who indicate that a person, program, or character is a favorite (Kahle & Kahle, 2005).

A good match-up is crucial; fame alone is not enough. The celebrity may bring the brand visibility, but that visibility can be overshadowed by controversy that the spokesperson can generate. For example, in 2018, Gal Gadot became a brand ambassador for Huawei and tweeted a promotional video for the brand’s Android cell phone. However, Gal uploaded the video using “Twitter for iPhone,” a competing product for Huawei (Ellevsen, 2018). This raised controversy and social buzz that cloaked the purpose of the promotional video; to garner attention for the brand. Similarly, the Beef Board faced negative publicity when its spokesperson, Cybill Shepherd, admitted she did not like to eat beef. Without question, it helps when your spokesperson actually uses (or matches up with) the product they are promoting. In the case of Lance Armstrong, sportswear giant Nike, cycle maker Trek, and Budweiser brewer Anheuser-Busch ended their sponsorships with the cyclist after his admittance of using unethical performance enhancing means to win (Meyer, 2019).

Because consumers tend to view the brand through the lens of its spokesperson, an advertiser can’t choose an endorser just based on a whim (or the person’s good looks). Consider Tupperware, which decided to mount an advertising campaign to support its traditional word-of-mouth and Tupperware party promotional strategies. The brand is 60 years old and harkens back to 1950s-style June Cleaver moms (A “Leave it to Beaver” reference that dates too far back for most readers). In its attempt to stay relevant and up-to-date, the company looked for a modern image of the working mom. Rather than going with a spokesperson like Martha Stewart, who would reinforce the old image of Tupperware, the company chose Brooke Shields as their spokesperson. “We’ve seen her go from a model to an actress to a Princeton graduate…then be open with issues she's had with depression," said Tupperware Chairman-CEO Rick Goings. That, he said, meshed perfectly with the company's new "Chain of Confidence" campaign, which is dedicated to building the self-esteem of women and girls (Neff, 2007). [1]

Celebrity Endorsements

Celebrity endorsements are a frequent feature in commercials aimed at children. The practice has aroused considerable ethical concern, and research shows the concern is warranted. In a study funded by the Federal Trade Commission, more than 400 children ages 8 to 14 were shown one of various commercials for a model racing set. Some of the commercials featured an endorsement from a famous race car driver, some included real racing footage, and others included neither. Children who watched the celebrity endorser not only preferred the toy cars more but were convinced the endorser was an expert about the toys. This held true for children of all ages. In addition, they believed the toy race cars were bigger, faster, and more complex than real race cars they saw on film. They were also less likely to believe the commercial was staged (Ross et al., 1984).

1.

Star Power & the Halo Effect

Star Power

Star power can best be explained like this: if a famous person believes a product is good, you can believe it, too. For the advertising to be effective, however, the connection between the product and the celebrity should be clear. When Louis Vuitton featured Mikhail Gorbachev in an ad in *Vogue*, the tie was not clear. Why would the association with the former Soviet leader who brought an end to Communism motivate a consumer to buy a luxury brand bag?

This framework is effective because celebrities embody *cultural meanings* — they symbolize important categories such as status and social class (a "working-class hero," such as Peter Griffin on *Family Guy*), gender (a "tough woman," such as Nancy on *Weeds*), or personality types (the nerdy but earnest Hiro on *Heroes*). Ideally, the advertiser decides what meanings the product should convey (that is, how it should position the item in the marketplace) and then chooses a celebrity who embodies a similar meaning. The product's meaning thus moves from the manufacturer to the consumer, using the star as a vehicle.

The Halo Effect

Armed with positive information about a person we then tend to assume other positive qualities, called the halo effect (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977). So if a person is really nice, we will also assume they are attractive or intelligent. If rude, we will see them as unintelligent or unattractive. The halo effect creates a type of cognitive bias and marketers know this! If we have a favourable attitude towards a brand's products, there's a good chance that same attitude will be extended to the brand's other products, or even future product-line extensions. The same can be said about a celebrity endorser: if we have a favourable attitude towards a particular celebrity or athlete and they endorse a product, there's a good chance we will also have a favourable attitude towards the product they are endorsing.

The Balance Theory of Attitudes

Fritz Heider's **Balance Theory** is a conceptual framework that demonstrates how consistency as a motivational force predicts attitude change and behaviour. The model can be used to predict the behaviour of consumers in situations where a celebrity endorser may be involved. If the audience (consumers) have a favourable attitude towards a celebrity and perceive that the celebrity likes a particular brand (communicated through an endorsement deal), the consumer is more likely to develop a positive attitude towards the brand—thus providing "balance" between all three components in the triad (the consumer, the celebrity, and the brand). However, imbalance can occur if a consumer develops a dislike towards the celebrity (e.g. due to scandal), which could then result in the same negative attitude being extended to the brand if they continue to maintain positive ties with the celebrity. Many brands will "drop" a celebrity in order to maintain a positive relationship with consumers.

The Balance Theory of Attitudes can be explained visually and mathematically:

The Balance Theory Explained

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=110#h5p-13

Barely a day goes by without a story in the news that features a brand or corporation who has decided to cut ties with a celebrity, an athlete, and even a politician. At the time of writing, American democracy is being put to the test and finding itself challenged by fascists and domestic terrorists. On January 6, 2021, the United States Congress experienced an attack by violent insurgents who attempted, what many believe to have been, a coup or at the very least, a serious disruption to the democratic process involving the peaceful transition of power and government from President Donald Trump to President-Elect Joe Biden.

In the following week, many corporations suspended, recalled, or halted funding to those politicians who made attempts to disrupt the transition of government. New York Times writers Andrew Ross Sorkin, Jason Karaian, Michael J. de la Merced, Lauren Hirsch, and Ephrat Livni, documented and summarized those companies who are "rethinking" their political donations (2021). Among the most notable corporations who paused all political donations were Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan Chase, and

Citigroup. Those corporations who paused donations to specific politicians (*individuals who voted against certification of the election*) included Marriott and Blue Cross Blue Shield.

The discussion below serves to highlight how the Balance Theory works in a retail branding context: however, this framework can be applied to the discussion above as well. Students are encouraged to come up with their own examples of the Balance Theory in action!

Warning! Doing Business with Trump Could Hurt Your Bottom Line

A consumer behaviour concept, known as "The Balance Theory of Attitudes", can predict why so many brands are "dumping Trump" to save their businesses. Since the 2016 election of US President Donald Trump, many consumer-based activism movements emerged to voice their disapproval of the Republican president who has mocked the disabled; called for an illegal "Muslim ban"; threatened to criminalize abortion; accused Mexicans of being violent criminals; encouraged harm and brutality towards Black Americans; and, perpetuated conspiracy theories about "fake news".

According to Solomon et al (7th ed), the Balance Theory of Attitudes is a model that involves a triad that considers the relationship between 3 entities: (1) a person and their perception of an (2) attitude object, and some other person or object (Solomon, 2017). It matters less if perceptions and attitudes among the individuals and objects are negative or positive and more if they are in balance.

When the triad is imbalanced due to an attitude change (e.g. by consumers), there will be a natural draw to remove cognitive dissonance and restore balance by changing the nature of one other relationship within the triad. This is how the model can be used to predict brand success or brand disassociation.

After the 2016 Presidential election, an online movement known as #GrabYourWallet started exposing those brands who were continuing to choose to do business with Trump (grabyourwallet.org, 2017). For example, Nordstrom (a popular US department store), Ivanka Trump (daughter to Donald Trump who sells women's merchandise), and a fictitious loyal consumer (let's call her "Jennifer") demonstrate how the Balance Theory predicts outcomes when attitude change occurs.

Before the election, this triad (Nordstrom, Ivanka, Jennifer) all existed in a positive and balanced relationship. Jennifer, an ideal consumer in Nordstrom's perspective, had a favourable attitude towards Ivanka Trump which encouraged the department store to carry the Trump branded merchandise in its stores.

Shortly after the election, however, Jennifer's attitude began to change. The violent rhetoric and lies made by the US President met with her disapproval and she became increasingly concerned about the growing hostilities towards BIPOC (*Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour*). Jennifer reflected on how her behaviour as a consumer made her complicit (*passively supportive*) of the President and his family: her once favourable attitude towards Ivanka and the Trump clothing line now turned sour. Negative. With this change, the triad found itself imbalanced and Nordstrom was faced with a big decision: continue to carry Ivanka Trump merchandise and risk losing loyal consumers like Jennifer, or, dump Trump and maintain a positive relationship with its consumers. What was the best course of action for Nordstrom in this situation? Knowing that Jennifer represented a majority of its consumer-base, Nordstrom had to protect its bottom line and brand reputation.

So, the Balance Theory of Attitudes reveals to us that the only real option Nordstrom had was to drop Ivanka Trump's merchandise from its retail mix. (Which is exactly what the mega retailer did.) They weighed the cost of doing business with Trump versus the long-term value loyal consumers bring to their bottom line and chose to maintain a positive and favourable relationship with Jennifer and convert its once positive support for Ivanka Trump into a negative one. And voilà, balance restored.

As a consumer I am aware that I am responsible for the purchase decisions I make and the impact those decisions have on business, society, and the people I may influence around me (my husband, my kids, my students). Given that female consumers make up 50% of our consumer economy and are responsible for 80% of household purchasing decisions, I recognize that I hold a lot of power. It has taken time, but I have evolved to become a much more conscientious consumer: I recognize that my consumer decision making reflects the kind of person I wish to be — one who values social justice, equality, sustainability, and equity.

When a brand stands in direct opposition to consumers' values, the Balance Theory of Attitudes will often predict the outcome.

Creatively Persuasive

Beyond endorsements and the use of a source, persuasion can take on other forms and techniques as well. The following list provides an overview of different ways in which persuasion is designed to communicate compatibility, necessity, and urgency to consumers.

1. Reciprocity

"There is no duty more indispensable than that of returning a kindness," wrote Cicero. Humans are motivated by a sense of equity and fairness. When someone does something for us or gives us something, we feel obligated to return the favor in kind. It triggers one of the most powerful of social norms, *the reciprocity rule*, whereby we feel compelled to repay, in equitable value, what another person has given to us.

Gouldner (1960), in his seminal study of the reciprocity rule, found it appears in every culture. It lays the basis for virtually every type of social relationship, from the legalities of business arrangements to the subtle exchanges within a romance. A salesperson may offer free gifts, concessions, or their valuable time in order to get us to do something for them in return. For example, if a colleague helps you when you're busy with a project, you might feel obliged to support her ideas for improving team processes. You might decide to buy more from a supplier if they have offered you an aggressive discount. Or, you might give money to a charity fundraiser who has given you a flower in the street (Cialdini, 2008; Levine, 2003).

2. Social Proof

If everyone is doing it, it must be right. People are more likely to work late if others on their team are doing the same, to put a tip in a jar that already contains money, or eat in a restaurant that is busy. This principle derives from two extremely powerful social forces — *social comparison and conformity.* We compare our behaviour to what others are doing and, if there is a discrepancy between the other person and ourselves, we feel pressure to change (Cialdini, 2008).

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While few people really like to wait in long lines, we might do it anyway in certain situations. If enough people are willing to wait it (usually) is a sign that there is something worth having at the end. A line in front of a restaurant, movie, etc. is social proof that will likely influence other people to try.

The principle of social proof is so common that it easily passes unnoticed. Advertisements, for example, often consist of little more than attractive social models appealing to our desire to be one of the group. For example, the German candy company Haribo suggests that when you purchase their products you are joining a larger society of satisfied customers: “Kids and grown-ups love it so– the happy world of

Haribo". Sometimes social cues are presented with such specificity that it is as if the target is being manipulated by a puppeteer — for example, the laugh tracks on situation comedies that instruct one not only when to laugh but how to laugh. Studies find these techniques work. Fuller and Skeehy-Skeffington (1974), found that audiences laughed longer and more when a laugh track accompanied the show than when it did not, even though respondents knew the laughs they heard were connived by a technician from old tapes that had nothing to do with the show they were watching. People are particularly susceptible to social proof (a) when they are feeling uncertain, and (b) if the people in the comparison group seem to be similar to ourselves. As P.T. Barnum once said, "Nothing draws a crowd like a crowd."

3. Commitment & Consistency

Westerners have a desire to both feel and be perceived to act consistently. Once we have made an initial commitment, it is more likely that we will agree to subsequent commitments that follow from the first. Knowing this, a clever persuasion artist might induce someone to agree to a difficult-to-refuse small request and follow this with progressively larger requests that were his target from the beginning. The process is known as getting a foot in the door and then slowly escalating the commitments.

Paradoxically, we are less likely to say "No" to a large request than we are to a small request when it follows this pattern. This can have costly consequences. Levine (2003), for example, found ex-cult members tend to agree with the statement: "Nobody ever joins a cult. They just postpone the decision to leave."

4. A Door in the Face

Some techniques bring a paradoxical approach to the escalation sequence by pushing a request to or beyond its acceptable limit and then backing off. In the *door-in-the-face* (sometimes called the reject-then-compromise) procedure, the persuader begins with a large request they expect will be rejected. They want the door to be slammed in their face. Looking forlorn, they now follow this with a smaller request, which, unknown to the customer, was their target all along.

In one study, for example, Mowen and Cialdini (1980), posing as representatives of the fictitious "California Mutual Insurance Co.," asked university students walking on campus if they'd be willing to fill out a survey about safety in the home or dorm. The survey, students were told, would take about 15 minutes. Not surprisingly, most of the students declined — only one out of four complied with the request. In another condition, however, the researchers door-in-the-faced them by beginning with a much larger request. "The survey takes about two hours," students were told. Then, after the subject declined to participate, the experimenters retreated to the target request: ". . . look, one part of the survey is particularly important and is fairly short. It will take only 15 minutes to administer." Almost twice as many now complied.

5. "And That's Not All!"

The *that's-not-all* technique also begins with the salesperson asking a high price. This is followed by several seconds' pause during which the customer is kept from responding. The salesperson then offers a better deal by either lowering the price or adding a bonus product. That's-not-all is a variation on door-in-the-face. Whereas the latter begins with a request that will be rejected, however, that's-not-all gains its influence by putting the customer on the fence, allowing them to waver and then offering them a comfortable way off.

Burger (1986) demonstrated the technique in a series of field experiments. In one study, for example, an experimenter-salesman told customers at a student bake sale that cupcakes cost 75 cents. As this price was announced, another salesman held up his hand and said, "Wait a second," briefly consulted with the first salesman, and then announced ("that's-not-all") that the price today included two cookies. In a control condition, customers were offered the cupcake and two cookies as a package for 75 cents right at the onset. The bonus worked magic: Almost twice as many people bought cupcakes in the that's-not-all condition (73 per cent) than in the control group (40 per cent).

6. The Sunk Cost Trap

Sunk cost is a term used in economics referring to nonrecoverable investments of time or money. The trap occurs when a person's aversion to loss impels them to throw good money after bad, because they don't want to waste their earlier investment. This is vulnerable to manipulation. The more time and energy a cult recruit can be persuaded to spend with the group, the more "invested" they will feel, and, consequently, the more of a loss it will feel to leave that group. Consider the advice of billionaire investor Warren Buffet: "When you find yourself in a hole, the best thing you can do is stop digging" (Levine, 2003).

7. Scarcity & Psychological Reactance

People tend to perceive things as more attractive when their availability is *scarce* (limited), or when they stand to lose the opportunity to acquire them on favourable terms (Cialdini, 2008). Anyone who has encountered a willful child is familiar with this principle. In a classic study, Brehm and Weinraub (1977), for example, placed two-year-old boys in a room with a pair of equally attractive toys. One of the toys was placed next to a plexiglass wall; the other was set behind the plexiglass. For some boys, the wall was one foot high, which allowed the boys to easily reach over and touch the distant toy. Given this easy access, they showed no particular preference for one toy or the other. For other boys, however, the wall was a formidable two feet high, which required them to walk around the barrier to touch the toy. When confronted with this wall of inaccessibility, the boys headed directly for the forbidden fruit, touching it three times as quickly as the accessible toy.

Research shows that much of that two-year-old remains in adults, too. People resent being controlled. When a person seems too pushy, we get suspicious, annoyed, often angry, and yearn to retain our freedom of choice more than before. Brehm (1966) labeled this the principle of psychological reactance.

The most effective way to circumvent psychological reactance is to first get a foot in the door and then escalate the demands so gradually that there is seemingly nothing to react against. Hassan (1988), who spent many years as a higher-up in the "Moonies" cult, describes how they would shape behaviours subtly at first, then more forcefully. The material that would make up the new identity of a recruit was doled out gradually, piece by piece, only as fast as the person was deemed ready to assimilate it. The rule of thumb was to "tell him only what he can accept." He continues: "Don't sell them [the converts] more than they can handle . . . . If a recruit started getting angry because he was learning too much about us, the person working on him would back off and let another member move in…"

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CHAPTER REFLECTIONS

Continue Learning

1. The Elaboration Likelihood Model ("ELM") also presented as the "Central and Peripheral Route to Persuasion" demonstrates the different ways in which consumers process a message relative to their involvement: high involvement (central); low involvement (peripheral). Read this article published by Odyssey Online titled "An Attempt To Understand Why People Support Donald Trump" about how the Central and Peripheral Routes to Persuasion provide a basis of understanding related to the outcome of the 2016 Presidential election. Discuss the similarities between consumer decision making and politics with reference to this model.
2. As we learned in this chapter, changing attitudes can be an uphill battle for marketers. Persuasive messaging is one way we can attempt to change consumers' attitudes and often behaviour as well. In this video by Boulder Ignite, discuss how Ash Beckham successfully persuades her audience to reconsider using the word "gay" as a pejorative in our language. What makes Ash a credible "source" in delivering this important message?
3. After the 2016 US Presidential elections which brought Donald Trump to power, many counter-movements were created so voters, consumers, activists, and members of society could make their disapproving voices heard. One such movement, known as "Grab Your Wallet" (#grabyourwallet) has energized consumers across America (and even into Canada) to boycott brands that carry any Trump products—mostly notably was the case of Nordstrom's dropping Ivanka Trump's merchandise from their retail stores in early 2017. The #GrabYourWallet campaign started on social media and now several years later, has turned into one of the biggest consumer activism campaigns on record. Using this campaign as an example, discuss how the Balance Theory of Attitudes could have predicted the demise of the relationship between the "Trump name" and retailers such as Nordstrom.

TOPIC 9. SOCIAL INFLUENCES

Learning Objectives

In this section, we will learn about the key demographic, social, and situational influences on consumer decision making.

Upon completing this section, students should:

1. Identify the key demographic, social, and situational influences on consumer decision making.
2. Discuss how consumers respond to some of the key influences.
3. Provide examples of marketing strategies that use external factors to reach and influence consumers.
4. Discuss and give examples of different types of social influences such as reference groups and opinion leaders.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=128#h5p-18

- Anti-brand community: This term is characterized as a group of individuals who are bonded together by their mutual dislike, distrust, and aversion of a brand or product.
- Aspirational reference groups: These groups of people are not known to consumers personally, but instead represent a set of ideals that others admire usually because of their popularity and celebrity status.
- Atmospherics: A situational factor/influence on consumer decision making, atmospherics is the sum total of all physical aspects in a retail environment that the retailer controls and should monitor to create a pleasing shopping experience for customers.
- Brand community: This term is characterized as a group of passionate and enthusiastic consumers who are bonded together by their interest in a brand or product.
- Conformity: Both social comparison and informational social influence often lead to conformity, which is a long-lasting change in beliefs, opinions, and behaviours that are consistent with the people around us.
- Crowding: A situational factor/influence on decision making, a crowded store may result in a lower number of visitors converting to buyers, but it may also create “herd behaviour” in which some customers are more likely to purchase when part of a crowd.
- Deindividuation: The loss of individual self-awareness and accountability when an individual is absorbed into a larger group.
- Discretionary income: Discretionary income represents the amount of money we have left over to invest, save, or spend, after paying personal income taxes and necessities. Young adults often have to pay necessities like student loans and credit card debts, but also may pay less taxes, all of which effects their discretionary income. Discretionary income is different than disposable income because it takes necessary expenses into consideration.
- Disposable income: Disposable income represents the amount of money we have left over to invest, save, or spend, after paying personal income taxes. Seniors and retirees typically have more disposable income due to paying lower personal income taxes. Discretionary income is derived from disposable income.
- Family lifecycle: The family lifecycle represents the various stages we pass through from early adulthood to retirement. At each stage of the lifecycle consumer preferences are defined by different needs and wants and influenced by different forces.
- Hedonic shopping experience: The family lifecycle represents the various stages we pass through from early adulthood to retirement. At each stage of the lifecycle consumer preferences are defined

by different needs and wants and influenced by different forces.

- Heuristics: Also known as "mental shortcuts" or "rules of thumb," heuristics help consumers by simplifying the decision-making process.
- Influencer: An influencer is characterized as someone who is well-connected; has influence on consumers' decision making; has both reach and impact; and is identified as a trendsetter.
- Informational social influence: When we change change our opinions and behaviours in order to conform to the people closest to us, we use the term "informational social influence". We justify our changed opinions because we believe those people have accurate and reliable information that also serves our contexts.
- Layout (store layout): An interior variable, the layout refers to the design of the space inside a store as well as the placement of displays and other items customers come in contact with.
- Location: Store location is a situational factor/influence on decision making. Retailers who are located where consumers expect and want them to be, such as in high pedestrian traffic zones, tend to enjoy a higher volume of customers.
- Mere exposure: This term describes our preference to like things that we have seen more often, or more frequently. Increased and frequent exposure to a product may result in our developing a preference for the product that we wouldn't otherwise have.
- Non-conformity: This term describes situations where an individual (or group of individuals) reject or fail to go along with the rules, laws, and social norms of a larger group or society.
- Normative social influence: This term best describes situations in which we express opinions or take on behaviours that enable us to be accepted by others and avoid rejection or social isolation.
- Mood: A situational factor/influence on decision making, a consumer's mood expresses a temporary state of mind and feeling at a particular moment. It can also be expressed as the predominant emotion we are feeling.
- Opinion leaders: These are people who have the ability to influence others; they often set trends and norms that others conform to.
- Private acceptance: This is the result of conformity and is described as a real change in an individual's opinions.
- Proximity: The term describes the extent to which someone or something else is near to us.
- Reference group: A group of people that is often made up on opinion leaders who have influence on the attitudes, opinions, and behaviours of others.
- Social class: A term used to describe groups of people who have the same socio-economic status within society. Social class may be measured using income, education, and profession; however, classifications can often be incorrect because indicators might be misleading (e.g. someone with high school education can be a high income earner).
- Social comparison: When we compare our opinions to those of the people around us, we are engaging in social comparisons. Informational social influence often follows social comparison.

- Social influence: Social influence occurs when our beliefs and behaviours begin to match those of the people we're closest to. This may be subtle or it may be something we seek out by asking our friends for their opinions.
- Social norms: These are socially accepted beliefs about what we do or should do in particular social contexts.
- Time-starved: A term related to the situational factor/influence on decision making, "time," it conveys a sense of customer urgency to make purchases quickly and efficiently to meet their entire set of needs.
- Transition zone: The space immediately inside a retail store where customers pass through before engaging with merchandise and sales representatives. The transition zone serves as a place where customers can orient themselves and plan their route in the store.

SOCIAL INFLUENCES

The typical outcome of **social influence** is that our beliefs and behaviours become more similar to those of others around us. At times, this change occurs in a spontaneous and automatic sense, without any obvious intent of one person to change the other. Perhaps you learned to like jazz or rap music because your roommate was playing a lot of it. You didn't really want to like the music, and your roommate didn't force it on you — your preferences changed in a passive way. Robert Cialdini and his colleagues (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990) found that college students were more likely to throw litter on the ground when they had just seen another person throw some paper on the ground and were least likely to litter when they had just seen another person pick up and throw paper into a trash can. The researchers interpreted this as a kind of *spontaneous conformity* — a tendency to follow the behaviour of others, often entirely out of our awareness. Even our emotional states become more similar to those we spend more time with (Anderson, Keltner, & John, 2003).

Influence also sometimes occurs because we believe that other people have valid knowledge about an opinion or issue, and we use that information to help us make good decisions. For example, if you take a flight and land at an unfamiliar airport you may follow the flow of other passengers who disembarked before you. In this case your assumption might be that they know where they are going and that following them will likely lead you to the baggage carousel.

Getting Lost in a Crowd

Social psychologists are interested in studying self-awareness because it has such an important influence on behaviour. People become more likely to violate acceptable, mainstream social norms when, for example, they put on a Halloween mask or engage in other behaviours that hide their identities. For example, the members of the militant white supremacist organization, the Ku Klux Klan, wear white robes and hats when they meet and when they engage in violent racist behaviour.

Similarly, when people are in large crowds, such as in a mass demonstration or a riot, they may become so much a part of the group that they experience **deindividuation** — the loss of individual self-awareness and individual accountability in groups (Festinger, Pepitone & Newcomb, 1952; Zimbardo, 1969) and become more attuned to themselves as group members and to the specific social norms of the particular situation (Reicher & Stott, 2011).

Not all examples of deindividuation cause alarm or concern, however. Consider the community-based solution to crime prevention, "Bear Clan Patrol," which is a volunteer-run organization with membership in Winnipeg, Calgary, and Edmonton. Members provide, "a sense of safety, solidarity and belonging to both its members and to the communities they serve" ("Who we are," n.d.). Volunteer patrol teams head out into the dark, cold nights to help the most vulnerable living in the community. They come armed with care packages; they clean up discarded needles and drug paraphernalia; they distribute warm clothing and blankets; and, they provide a set of eyes on the streets where a police presence is less likely to serve those living in the community.

The organization was formed in response to the growing number of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls ("MMIWG") in urban and rural areas. The early founders of Bean Clan expressed a desire to assume their "traditional responsibility" to provide care and support to members of their community through culturally-specific approaches to security, safety, and check-ins.

The Bean Clan patrol groups demonstrate how when a group of like-minded individuals come together to address common concerns, their camaraderie provides a stronger sense of purpose and energy, possibly more so than when individuals act alone.

Influence, Conformity, & Norms

Informational social influence is *the change in opinions or behaviour that occurs when we conform to people who we believe have accurate information.* We base our beliefs on those presented to us by reporters, scientists, doctors, and lawyers because we believe they have more expertise in certain fields than we have. But we also use our friends and colleagues for information; when we choose a jacket on the basis of our friends' advice about what looks good on us, we are using informational conformity — we believe that our friends have good judgment about the things that matter to us.

Informational social influence is often the end result of **social comparison**, *the process of comparing our opinions with those of others to gain an accurate appraisal of the validity of an opinion or behaviour* (Festinger, Schachter, & Back, 1950; Hardin & Higgins, 1996; Turner, 1991). Informational social influence leads to real, long-lasting changes in beliefs. The result of **conformity** due to informational social influence is normally **private acceptance**: *real change in opinions on the part of the individual*. We believe that choosing the jacket was the right thing to do and that the crowd will lead us to the baggage carousel.

In other cases we conform not because we want to have valid knowledge but rather to meet the goal of belonging to and being accepted by a group that we care about (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955). When we start smoking cigarettes or buy shoes that we cannot really afford in order to impress others, we do these things not so much because we think they are the right things to do but rather because we want to be liked.

We fall prey to **normative social influence** *when we express opinions or behave in ways that help us to be accepted or that keep us from being isolated or rejected by others*. When we engage in conformity due to normative social influence we conform to **social norms** — *socially accepted beliefs about what we do or should do in particular social contexts* (Cialdini, 1993; Sherif, 1936; Sumner, 1906).

Although in some cases conformity may be purely informational or purely normative, in most cases the goals of being accurate and being accepted go hand-in-hand, and therefore informational and normative social influence often occur at the same time. When soldiers obey their commanding officers, they probably do it both because others are doing it (normative conformity) and because they think it is the right thing to do (informational conformity). And when you start working at a new job you may copy the behaviour of your new colleagues because you want them to like you as well as because you assume they know how things should be done. It has been argued that the distinction between informational and normative conformity is more apparent than real and that it may not be possible to fully differentiate them (Turner, 1991).

Non-conformity occurs when an individual or group of individuals fail to confirm to rules, laws, and social norms. Why would some individuals elect to be non-conformists? The *need for uniqueness* is a is seen as a *trait* or temporary *motivation* resulting from situational triggers. Some individuals exhibit a greater need to feel different from others or from the anonymous majority and sometimes there are situations that create this need to feel unique. One situation that triggers this is when you feel too similar to others making the major position undesirable. In this case, you opt for nonconformity (Imhoff, et al., 2009).

Marketing to the Non-Conformists

Where can we find examples of non-conformity in marketing? Well, all around us actually. If I look at my children's clothes I find batches of (intentionally) miss-matched socks for kids like mine who can't usually be bothered to find matching ones. When I went shopping for Christmas presents this year I was amazed to find Barbie dolls that didn't conform to what I grew up with: they were sized and shaped much more naturally and came with kits representing professions and interests far outside of the stereotypes Barbie has represented for decades.

In pop media we see examples of non-conformists all the time: Lady Gaga is a perfect example of someone who wears their difference with pride. Morty Silber writes, "[s]he is a talented signer and performer that wears mirrored dresses, bubble outfits, rubber suits and lovingly names her fans her "monsters". She does things differently than all the other artists and she isn't afraid to take creative risks or create enemies. She owns her differences and many people are drawn to her radically different non-conformist ways (Silber, 2015).

Reference Groups & Opinion Leaders

Reference groups are groups (social groups, work groups, family, or close friends) a consumer identifies with and may want to join. They influence consumers' attitudes and behavior. A reference group helps shape a person's attitudes and behaviours.

Opinion leaders are people who influence others. They are not necessarily higher-income or better educated, but perhaps are seen as having greater expertise or knowledge related to some specific topic. For example, a local high school teacher may be an opinion leader for parents in selecting colleges for their children. These people set the trend and others conform to the expressed behaviour. If a marketer can identify the opinion leaders for a group in the target market, then effort can be directed toward attracting these individuals. For example, if an ice cream parlor is attempting to attract the local high school trade, opinion leaders at the school may be very important to its success.

An information technology (IT) specialist with a great deal of knowledge about computer brands is another example of an opinion leader. These people's purchases often lie at the forefront of leading trends. The IT specialist is probably a person who has the latest and greatest tech products, and their opinion of them is likely to carry more weight with you than any sort of advertisement.

How Reference Groups Influence Individuals

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- Role expectation: The role assumed by a person is nothing more than a prescribed way of behaving based on the situation and the person's position in the situation. Your reference group determines much about how this role is to be performed.
  As a student, you are expected to behave in a certain basic way under certain conditions.
- Conformity: Conformity is related to our roles in that we modify our behaviour in order to coincide with group norms. Norms are behavioural expectations that are considered appropriate regardless of the position we hold.
- Group communications through opinion leaders: As consumers, we are often seeking out the advice of knowledgeable friends or acquaintances who can provide information, give advice, or actually make the decision for us. For some product categories there are professional opinion leaders who are quite easy to identify. For example, auto mechanics, make-up artists, financial advisers, and physicians.
- Word-of-mouth ("WOM") influence: Do you have a good dentist? Where's your favourite place to go for Pho? What would be a good "first dance" song for a wedding? Who's taken Marketing and which instructor should I get?

Aspirational reference groups, on the other hand, are comprised of those individuals who consumers may not know personally but admire because of their popularity and notoriety. If you have ever dreamed of being a professional player of basketball or another sport, you have an aspirational reference group. These figures hold a sort of power over consumers because others aspire to be like them or live their kind of lifestyles. Famous athletes, musicians, actors, and other kinds of public figures can represent aspirational reference groups.

Reference groups, opinion leaders, and aspirational reference groups are essential concepts in digital marketing, where consumers tap into a variety of social networks and online communities. Marketers need to understand which groups/leaders influence their target segments and who those groups or individuals are. Leaders may be bloggers, individuals with many followers who post frequently on various social media, and even people who write lots of online reviews. Then marketing activity can focus on winning over the opinion leaders. If you manage to get the opinion leaders in your segment to "like" your product, "follow" your brand, tweet about your news and publish favourable reviews or comments on their blogs, your work with online reference groups is going well.

How Proximity & Exposure Influence Consumers

The degree of influence a reference group may have on a consumer depends on two factors: *proximity* and *mere exposure*. **Proximity**, or *the extent to which people are physically near us,* influence the relationships we build. Research has found that we are more likely to develop friendships with people who are nearby, for instance, those who live in the same dorm that we do, and even with people who just happen to sit nearer to us in our classes (Back, Schmukle, & Egloff, 2008).

Proximity has its effect on liking through the principle of **mere exposure**, which is *the tendency to prefer stimuli (including but not limited to people) that we have seen more frequently*. In the months leading up to the Vancouver Winter Olympics in 2010, apparel such as hoodies, toques, and mittens were widely available but hardly seen on the streets. After the torch relay came to Vancouver, the infamous "red mittens" started making an appearance everywhere: eventually after seeing Olympic apparel more and more on TV and around time, consumers were buying anything Olympic that they could get their hands on. Just by seeing the items more often consumers grew to like them enough to buy them.

Influencers

There is a lack of consensus about what an **influencer** is. One writer defines them as "a range of third parties who exercise influence over the organization and its potential customers" (Peck et al., 1999). Another defines an influencer as a "third party who significantly shapes the customer's purchasing decision but may never be accountable for it" (Brown & Hayes, 2008). According to another, influencers are "well-connected, create an impact, have active minds, and are trendsetters" (Keller & Berry, 2003). And just because an individual has a large number of followers does not necessarily mean they have a large number of influence over those individuals (Cha et al. & Berinato, 2010).

Sources of influencers vary. Marketers target easily-identifiable influencers, such as journalists, industry analysts, and high-profile executives. For most business-to-consumer (B2C) purchases, influencers may include people known to the purchaser and the retail staff. In high-value business-to-business (B2B) transactions, influencers may be diverse and might include consultants, government-backed regulators, financiers, and user communities.

One of the most well-known fashion influencers and bloggers is Chiara Ferragni. As of 2020, Ferragni has 19.3 million followers on Instagram ("Chiara Ferragni," 2020). Ferragni started her fashion blog in 2009 and by 2014 her business ventured grossed about $8 million. Her list of public appearances and enterprising activities is extensive: she modeled for Guess and collaborated with Steve Madden; presented at awards shows; walked the red carpet at the Cannes Film Festival; was a guest judge on Project Runway; became a Pantene "global ambassador;" and, became the subject of a Harvard Business School case study!

Brand & Anti-Brand Communities

A **brand community** is a group of consumers who share a set of social relationships based upon usage or interest in a product. Muniz Jr. and O'Guinn (2001) define a brand community as, "a specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relations among admirers of a brand."

Unlike other kinds of communities, these members typically don't live near each other—except when they may meet for brief periods at organized events or brandfests that community-oriented companies such as Jeep, Saturn, or Harley-Davidson sponsor. These events help owners to "bond" with fellow enthusiasts and strengthen their identification with the product as well as with others they meet who share their passion.

That Time TikTok Users & K-Pop Stans Took on the US President

Sometimes brand communities engage in the most unanticipated ways. For example, in June 2020, a historic merging of two brand communities—TikTok users and fans of Korean pop music—took place when they united to prank the US President Donald Trump by ruining a scheduled campaign rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma on June 19th. TikTok users represent a global community of teens and young adults who use the platform for social sharing and commenting on videos. Fans of Korean pop music are called "K-Pop Stans" and like their TikTok allies, they know a thing or two about working with different platforms' algorithms to boost exposure of their videos. June 19th marks a special day for Black Americans: it commemorates the 1865 emancipation of enslaved people in the United States. The day has become known as, "Juneteeth," and in 2020, young Americans were enraged that the President had scheduled a campaign rally in a southern state on such an important holiday.

TikTok users and KPop Stans—many of whom were not even old enough to vote at the time—joined forces and engaged in a wide-scale activism movement that involved creating false reservations for the President's campaign rally tickets. Videos were created, shared, and then deleted so members outside of these communities had no hint at what was being planned. Soon, the message spread like a wildfire on Tiktok—go online, reserve a ticket, don't show up, share with others, delete the evidence. Even the media had no idea what all these users were up to.

Within hours of opening the online ticket registration website, the Trump campaign was announcing that over a million seats had been reserved (tickets were free, but those reserving had to provide address information which of course was falsified by the young activists) and an outdoor overflow area had been secured for what they believed to be exceptionally high demand to see the President.

The Tulsa Fire Department reported after the event that the fire marshal counted 6,200 scanned tickets in attendance (Lorenz et al., 2020) and the outdoor overflow area remained empty. Not only had the young activists foiled the President's plans, their reservation information (addresses and zip codes) contaminated the Republican Party's Contact List making it impossible to separate the legitimate Trump supporters from those masking as one.

Often we hold a narrow view of what brand communities are and how they interact within the group. We tend to also see them as a vehicle for larger marketing strategies such as advertising and promotional campaigns to draw more attention to a brand. However, the Tulsa event tells us otherwise: a brand community exists to serve its people (Fournier & Lee, 2009) and participation in that community isn't just about the brand itself. In fact, often, "people are more interested in the social inks that come form brand affiliations than they are in the brand themselves. They join communities to build new relationsips (Fournier & Lee, 2009).

In June 2020, TikTok users and K-Pop Stans showed the world how online communities can come together to organize, mobilize, and become a powerful force for change.

"The antithesis of a brand community," writes Hollenbeck & Zinkhan (2006), "is an **anti-brand community**. In the same way that brand communities are forming around commonly used brands, anti-brand communities are forming around common aversions toward brands." Using the Internet as a vehicle for widespread communications, organization, and activism, anti-brand communities are also geographically dispersed. They may oppose specific brands (e.g., AirB&B; Uber; Starbucks; Facebook; Chick-fil-A), but could also oppose large enterprises and corporate brands (e.g., Monsanto; Nestle; The Weinstein Company; The Trump Organization; Amazon).

Anti-Brand Communities & Coronavirus

At the time of writing, our world is experiencing the Coronavirus global pandemic: many of us are either living in quarantine; lock down; spatial isolation; and/or some other form of extreme social distancing.

Before Covid19 dominated our news stories and conversations, large cities across North America (and presumably in Europe, Asia, and South America), AirBnb, a short-term and "lightly" regulated housing and vacation rental site, had been drawing criticism for its negative impact on housing affordability and diminishing supply. Now, as we all face the necessity of doing our part to "flatten the curve" by staying home (which in some parts of the world has been enforced through law), AirBnb draws even more criticism from society: homeless rates in most urban centres are high because affordability and supply have pushed individuals and families to live in shelters, cars, or in over-crowded situations. Will there be an appetite for the AirBnb business model post-pandemic? Will we return to how things were, or will the AirBnb anti-brand community influence consumer activism that will lead to stricter regulations and policies governing short-term rentals?

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CHAPTER REFLECTIONS

Continue Learning

1. A powerful tool for marketers is forming and leveraging brand community. A dedicated, loyal, and passionate consumer base will rally behind their favourite brand and spread their joy and enthusiasm far and wide. (That pays more than any Super Bowl ad or guerilla marketing campaign ever will). Explore Harvard Business Review's article titled "Get Brand Communities Right." Discuss how marketers should think about leveraging a brand community as a *business strategy* and not just for *marketing*.
2. You don't need to look much further than the 2016 US Presidential Election to find a perfect example of an anti-brand community. The "Boycott Trump" group provides details on the brands (Democratic/Liberal) consumers should avoid due to their support or allegiance to Trump. See the Ad Week article titled "This Democratic Super PAC's App Identifies Which Brands Anti-Trump Shoppers Should Boycott." and discuss the features of this anti-brand community and any other similar anti-brand communities you are familiar with.
3. What can we learn about Aritzia's marketing campaign around the release of the *Super Puff*? Explore Geraldine Sebastian's article, "Super Pumped for the Super Puff: The Rise of Aritzia via Social Media" and discuss a range of consumer behaviour concepts covered in this textbook so far:
    - The role of celebrity influencers and specifically Kendall Jenner's paid partnership with Aritzia.
    - How the balance theory of attitudes influences (young/teenage) consumers through celebrity endorsements.
    - Aritzia's product line extension strategy and the launch of *Mr. Super Puff*.
    - The role Aritzia plays in fueling fast fashion and how the brand can avoid criticism in contributing to consumer capitalism.

TOPIC 10. CULTURE AND SUBCULTURES

Learning Objectives

In this section, we will learn about the relationship between **culture**, **subcultures**, and marketing and ways in which cultural concepts influence consumption.

Upon completing this section, students should:

1. Define the terms "culture" and "subculture."
2. Identify the key characteristics of culture and discuss ways in which it is learned and shared.
3. Explain the meaning of cultural appropriation and provide examples of how marketers have appropriated cultural aspects to pursue marketing goals.
4. Explain the complexities around categorizing gender and ethnic subcultures and how marketers can avoid perpetuating stereotypes in marketing activities.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=143#h5p-20

- Acculturation: The process of adopting and adjusting to a new and often prevailing (dominant) cultural environment.
- Assimilation: The voluntary or forceful abandonment of one's own culture, namely — values, customs, traditions, language, and identity — with the intent to adopt those of the prevalent (dominant) culture.
- Biases: Beliefs, feelings, and behaviour that express hostility or exclude members of groups or entire groups themselves.
- Consumer capitalism: A term that describes a material focus on consumption where (corporate) profit maximization is achieved as class structures and inequalities are exploited.
- Counterculture: A type of subculture that actively opposes and rejects norms, values, and symbols that reflect the larger culture in which it exists.
- Cultural appropriation: When features of a non-dominant culture (fashion, artifacts, food, language, etc.) are taken and used without consent, respect, and handled inappropriately further entrenching dangerous stereotypes about the non-dominant culture. Cultural appropriation also occurs when the dominant culture engages in "whitewashing" or exploits the cultural object in order to benefit from it while justifying the act as a way to "honour" the less dominant culture.
- Cultural norms: A set of standards and often unspoken "rules" that members of society collectively agree upon to serve as a basis of what's consider acceptable behaviour.
- Culture: The sum of learned beliefs, values, and customs that help us know how to behave as members of society.
- Customs: A term that describes a traditional and widely accepted way of behaving in a given society. Customs have existed for many generations and are passed down to the next one.
- De-ethnicization: When a product becomes part of "mainstream society" (dominant culture) through the removal or disassociation with its original ethnic group (or culture).
- De-sacralization: The removal of sacred symbolism when an object becomes absorbed by mainstream society (dominant culture).
- Discrimination: A type of behavioural bias that results in the deliberate exclusion of others.
- Enacted norms: These norms are endorsed by one's own culture and are expressed as explicit rules of behaviour.
- Enculturation: The way in which people learn about culture and shared cultural knowledge.
- Ethnic group: A distinct group of people with a shared ancestry, identity, and heritage who will often share a common language, religious or spiritual practices, patterns of dress, diet, customs,

and holidays.

- Gatekeeper: People who have the power and ability to determine what information gets shared, what stories get told, what movies get made, and what television shows get produced. Gatekeepers control access to information and the dissemination of that information to the public.
- Gender: A social and historical construct resulting in a set of culturally invented expectations of a “role” (often male or female) one may assume, learn, and perform.
- High culture: A term used to describe cultural experiences, symbols, and attitudes that are often associated with wealthy of “high class” members of society.
- Individualism: A cultural orientation that emphasizes personal freedom, self-expression, and individual decision-making.
- Multiculturalism: The existence of multiple ethnic groups living together in a mixed-ethnic society.
- Myths: A story with symbolic elements that represent a culture’s ideals.
- Own-group preference: The tendency to favour members of our own group (or “in-group”) over others who belong to different groups.
- Popular (Pop) culture: A term used to describe cultural experiences, symbols, and attitudes that are often associated with members of mainstream society.
- Prejudice: A type of emotional bias inflicted upon members outside of one’s own social group.
- Profane consumption: Consumer purchases that are comprised of “every day” items that do not hold any sort of special or symbolic status.
- Race: Race is a social construct that defines different groups of humans based on arbitrary characteristics that can be related to physical and/or biological traits. These traits then are used to distinguish groups of humans from one another.
- Rite(s) of passage: A culturally-significant event or ritual that (often) marks an important time, or transition, in one’s life.
- Rituals: A pattern of behaviour that is often in a fixed-sequence and repeated regularly and gives added meaning and significance to a particular culture.
- Sacralization: A process that describes when an everyday item takes on a sacred status.
- Scripts: A sequence or set of behaviours members of society are expected to follow or adhere to.
- Sex-typed: Also referred to as “gender-typed,” characterizes the suitability or appropriateness of stereotypical gendered products.
- Social identity theory: The tendency to favour one’s own “in-group” over another’s “outgroup.”
- Stereotypes: A type of cognitive bias that is presented as a generalized belief about a group of people.
- Subculture: A group of people with common values, beliefs, language, experiences, etc. that exist within a much larger group (culture).
- Symbol: A cultural symbol can be an object, word, or action that represents a culture, or something else specifically within a culture. Symbols can have cultural meaning and significance and may be

used to show affiliation to a (political) party, group, or subculture.

CULTURE EXPLAINED

In the previous sections we explored some of the different external factors that influence consumer decision making, such as demographic, social, and situational. In this section we take a closer look at another external factor, culture: what it is; how it is defined; how it can change; and, how culture and marketing influence, inform, and reflect one another.

Since different cultures have different values, consumers have different buying habits. Marketing strategies should reflect the culture that is being targeted. The strategy should show the product or service as reinforcing the beliefs, values and customs of the targeted culture. Failing to do so can result in lost sales and opportunities.

Culture

Culture is the sum of learned beliefs, values, and customs that regulate the behavior of members of a particular society. Through our culture, we are taught how to adjust to the environmental, biological, psychological, and historical parts of our environment. Beliefs and values are guides of behavior, and customs are acceptable ways of behaving. A belief is an opinion that reflects a person's particular knowledge and assessment of ("I believe that …"). Values are general statements that guide behavior and influence beliefs and attitudes ("Honesty is the best policy"). A value system helps people choose between alternatives in everyday life. Customs are overt modes of behavior that constitute culturally approved ways of behaving in specific situations. Customs vary among countries, regions, and even families

Culture, Customs, & the Coronavirus

At the time of writing, the Coronavirus and Covid19 has spread worldwide causing a global pandemic. Social distancing—aka physical distancing—measures are in place in nearly every community, city, and country around the world. While we physically distance ourselves from friends, family, neighbours, and strangers on the street and in grocery stores, we have to wonder how certain **customs** will change as a result of the pandemic? Infectious disease experts, including Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in the United States, say we should never return to the custom of "shaking hands" with others. In an interview for The Journal (2020), Fauci said, "[w]hen you gradually come back, you don't jump into it with both feet. You say, what are the things you could still do and still approach normal? One of them is absolute compulsive hand washing. The other is you don't ever shake anybody's hands."

For marketers anywhere in the world, it is essential to develop a strong understanding of the local culture and its accompanying beliefs, values, and customs. Culture is how people make sense of their society, its institutions, and social order. Culture frames how and what people communicate, how they express what is proper and improper, what is desirable and detestable. Without an understanding of culture, marketers are not really even speaking the right language to the consumers they want to target. Even if the words, grammar, and pronunciation are correct, the meaning will be off.

Cultural Norms in Society

Just as culture can be seen in dress and food, it can also be seen in morality, identity, and gender roles. People from around the world differ in their views of premarital sex, religious tolerance, respect for elders, and even the importance they place on having fun. Similarly, many behaviours that may seem innate are actually products of culture. Approaches to punishment, for example, often depend on **cultural norms** for their effectiveness. In the United States, people who ride public transportation without buying a ticket face the possibility of being fined. By contrast, in some other societies, people caught dodging the fare are socially shamed by having their photos posted publicly. The reason this campaign of "name and shame" might work in one society but not in another is that members of different cultures differ in how comfortable they are with being singled out for attention. This strategy is less effective for people who are not as sensitive to the threat of public shaming.

There are several features of culture that are central to understanding the uniqueness and diversity of the human mind:

1. ***Versatility***: Culture can change and adapt. Someone from the state of Orissa, in India, for example, may have multiple identities. She might see herself as Oriya when at home and speaking her native language. At other times, such as during the national cricket match against Pakistan, she might consider herself Indian. This is known as situational identity.
2. ***Sharing***: Culture is the product of people sharing with one another. Humans cooperate and share knowledge and skills with other members of their networks. The ways they share, and the content of what they share, helps make up culture. Older adults, for instance, remember a time when long-distance friendships were maintained through letters that arrived in the mail every few months. Contemporary youth culture accomplishes the same goal through the use of instant text messages on smart phones.
3. ***Accumulation***: Cultural knowledge is cumulative. That is, information is "stored." This means that a culture's collective learning grows across generations. We understand more about the world today than we did 200 years ago, but that doesn't mean the culture from long ago has been erased by the new. For instance, members of the Haida culture—a First Nations people in British Columbia, Canada—profit from both ancient and modern experiences. They might employ traditional fishing practices and wisdom stories while also using modern technologies and services.
4. ***Patterns***: There are systematic and predictable ways of behaviour or thinking across members of a culture. Patterns emerge from adapting, sharing, and storing cultural information. Patterns can be both similar and different across cultures. For example, in both Canada and India it is considered polite to bring a small gift to a host's home. In Canada, it is more common to bring a bottle of wine and for the gift to be opened right away. In India, by contrast, it is more common to bring sweets, and often the gift is set aside to be opened later.

Culture is Learned

It's important to understand that culture is learned. People aren't born using chopsticks or being good at soccer simply because they have a genetic predisposition for it. They learn to excel at these activities because they are born in countries like Taiwan, where chopsticks are the primary eating utensils, or countries like Argentina, where playing soccer is an important part of daily life. So, how are such cultural behaviours learned? It turns out that cultural skills and knowledge are learned in much the same way a person might learn to do algebra or knit. They are acquired through a combination of explicit teaching and implicit learning — by observing and copying.

Cultural teaching can take many forms. It begins with parents and caregivers, because they are the primary influence on young children. Caregivers teach kids, both directly and by example, about how to behave and how the world works. They encourage children to be polite, reminding them, for instance, to say “Thank you.” They teach kids how to dress in a way that is appropriate for the culture. They introduce children to religious beliefs and the rituals that go with them. They even teach children how to think and feel! Adult men, for example, often exhibit a certain set of emotional expressions — such as being tough and not crying — that provides a model of masculinity for their children. This is why we see different ways of expressing the same emotions in different parts of the world.

In some societies, it is considered appropriate to conceal anger. Instead of expressing their feelings outright, people purse their lips, furrow their brows, and say little. In other cultures, however, it is appropriate to express anger. In these places, people are more likely to bare their teeth, furrow their brows, point or gesture, and yell (Matsumoto, Yoo, & Chung, 2010). Such patterns of behaviour are learned. Often, adults are not even aware that they are, in essence, teaching psychology — because the lessons are happening through observational learning.

Let’s consider a single example of a way you behave that is learned, which might surprise you. All people gesture when they speak. We use our hands in fluid or choppy motions — to point things out, or to pantomime actions in stories. Consider how you might throw your hands up and exclaim, “I have no idea!” or how you might motion to a friend that it’s time to go. Even people who are born blind use hand gestures when they speak, so to some degree this is a *universal behaviour*, meaning all people naturally do it. However, social researchers have discovered that culture influences how a person gestures. Italians, for example, live in a society full of gestures. In fact, they use about 250 of them (Poggi, 2002)! Some are easy to understand, such as a hand against the belly, indicating hunger. Others, however, are more difficult. For example, pinching the thumb and index finger together and drawing a line backwards at face level means “perfect,” while knocking a fist on the side of one’s head means “stubborn.”

Culture: A Learning Process

The understanding of culture as a learned pattern of views and behaviours is interesting for several reasons. First, it highlights the ways groups can come into conflict with one another. Members of different cultures simply learn different ways of behaving. Modern youth culture, for instance, interacts with technologies such as smart phones using a different set of rules than people who are in their 40s, 50s, or 60s. Older adults might find texting in the middle of a face-to-face conversation rude while younger people often do not.

These differences can sometimes become politicized and a source of tension between groups. One example of this is Muslim women who wear a hijab, or head scarf. Non-Muslims do not follow this practice, so occasional misunderstandings arise about the appropriateness of the tradition. Second, understanding that culture is learned is important because it means that people can adopt an appreciation of patterns of behaviour that are different than their own. For example, non-Muslims might find it helpful to learn about the hijab. Where did this tradition come from? What does it mean and what are various Muslim opinions about wearing one?

Finally, understanding that culture is learned can be helpful in developing self-awareness. For instance, people from the United States might not even be aware of the fact that their attitudes about public nudity are influenced by their cultural learning. While women often go topless on beaches in Europe and women living a traditional tribal existence in places like the South Pacific also go topless, it is illegal for women in some of the United States to do so. These **cultural norms** for modesty—reflected in government laws and policies– also enter the discourse on social issues such as the appropriateness of breast-feeding in public. Understanding that your preferences are—in many cases—the products of cultural learning might empower you to revise them if doing so will lead to a better life for you or others.

Often the differences between cultures can be identified through a closer examination of each culture's unique practices and beliefs involving symbols, myths, rituals, and rites of passage.

Symbols, Myths, Rituals & Rites of Passage

A symbol is an object, word, or action that stands for something else, depending on the culture. Everything one does throughout their life is based and organized through cultural symbolism, which is when something represents abstract ideas or concepts. Symbols can represent a group or organization that one is affiliated with and mean different things to different people, which is why it is impossible to hypothesize how a specific culture will symbolize something. Some symbols are gained from experience, while others are gained from culture. One of the most common cultural symbols is language.

Myths and rituals are the stories and practices that define a culture. A **myth** is a story with symbolic elements that represents a culture's ideals. Each culture creates its own stories to help its members understand the world. Many companies (and perhaps most advertising agencies) are in a sense in the myth business; they tell us stories that we collectively absorb. Some marketers tell these stories more overtly than others: Disney stages about 2,000 Cinderella weddings every year; the princess bride wears a tiara and rides to the park's lakeside wedding pavilion in a horse-drawn coach, complete with two footmen in gray wigs and gold lamé pants (Marr, 2007; Holson, 2003). [1]And the Shrek movies remind us that even the ugliest suitor can land the princess if his heart is in the right place.

A **ritual** is a set of multiple symbolic behaviours that occurs in a fixed sequence and is repeated periodically (Rook, 1985). We all engage in private consumer rituals, whether this involves grooming activities that we perform the same way every morning or that obligatory trip to Starbucks on the way to school. Gift-giving is also a type of ritual: birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, house-warmings, and even Valentine's are examples of celebrations involving gift-giving rituals. And as members of a culture we share public rituals such as watching the Olympics, the WorldCup, or even tuning in each week to vote on our favourite reality show (such as *American Idol, or the Voice)*. Advertisers often create messages that tie in to these myths and rituals, such as selling HDTVs for the Super Bowl and Doritos to share with your friends as you watch the game.

Beyond observational learning, cultures also use rituals to teach people what is important. For example, young people who are interested in becoming Buddhist monks often have to endure rituals that help them shed feelings of "specialness" or superiority — feelings that run counter to Buddhist doctrine. To do this, they might be required to wash their teacher's feet, scrub toilets, or perform other menial tasks. Similarly, many Jewish adolescents go through the process of *bar* and *bat mitzvah*. This is a ceremonial reading from scripture that requires the study of Hebrew and, when completed, signals that the youth is ready for full participation in public worship.

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Rites of Passage are a common type of ritual that often taken place to mark a significant change or transition in a person's life. These may occur to mark happy occasions, such as graduations, weddings, or having children and more sombre occasions such as the passing away of a loved one. The rituals surrounding rites of passage differ from one culture to another and can even be diverse within a culture. Marketers may position their products or services as necessary components to accompany a rite of passage: be it a young person's "first shave," a couple's engagement announcement, or a family's first pet.

Understanding the changing nature of culture is the first step toward appreciating how it helps people. The concept of cultural intelligence is the ability to understand why members of other cultures act in the ways they do. Rather than dismissing foreign behaviours as weird, inferior, or immoral, people high in cultural intelligence can appreciate differences even if they do not necessarily share another culture's views or adopt its ways of doing things.

Cultural Gatekeepers

In 1960, journalist A. J. Liebling (1904-1963) wryly observed that "freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one." Although he may not have put it in those terms, Liebling was talking about the role of gatekeepers in the media industry, another way in which cultural values influence mass communication. **Gatekeepers** are the people who help determine which stories make it to the public, including reporters who decide what sources to use, and editors who pick what gets published and which stories make it to the front page. Media gatekeepers are part of culture and thus have their own cultural values, whether consciously or unconsciously. In deciding what counts as newsworthy, entertaining, or relevant, gatekeepers use their own values to create and shape what gets presented to the wider public.

Observing how distinct cultures and subcultures present the same story can be indicative of those cultures' various cultural values. Another way to look critically at today's media messages is to examine how the media has functioned in the world and in your own country during different cultural periods.

Have you ever heard a story in the news — say a major political or sports headline — discussed by two (or more) media outlets in a completely opposing manner? Perhaps the politician or athlete has been applauded by one outlet, and then vilified by another? Media gatekeepers are part of culture and thus have their own cultural values, whether consciously or unconsciously. In deciding what counts as newsworthy, entertaining, or relevant, gatekeepers use their own values to create and shape what gets

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presented to the wider public. Conversely, gatekeepers may decide that some events are unimportant or uninteresting to consumers. Those events may never reach the eyes or ears of a larger public.

From a market perspective, consider the role of media & entertainment gatekeepers and the power they possess over what we watch on TV and which movies we see in the theatre. If gatekeepers green light entertainment that perpetuates gender stereotypes in TV and the white-washing of historical events in film, what effect does this have on our collective understanding of culture?

Representation & Gatekeepers

In their article, "Cultural **stereotypes** as gatekeepers: increasing girls' interest in computer science and engineering by diversifying stereotypes," Cheryan, Master, and Meltzoff (2015) discuss how gatekeepers can have a profound impact on representation. Despite having made significant inroads into many traditionally male-dominated fields (e.g., biology, chemistry), women continue to be underrepresented in computer science and engineering. Computer science and engineering are stereotyped in modern American culture as male-oriented fields that involve social isolation, an intense focus on machinery, and inborn brilliance. These stereotypes are compatible with qualities that are typically more valued in men than women in American culture. As a result, when computer science and engineering stereotypes are salient, girls report less interest in these fields than their male peers.

Popular movies and television shows like *Real Genius*, *The Big Bang Theory*, and *Silicon Valley* depict computer scientists and engineers as mostly white (and more recently Asian) males, socially unskilled, and singularly obsessed with technology. Similarly, portrayals of technology companies in popular newspapers and books often depict the "startup culture" that infuses some technology and engineering jobs (e.g., Guo, 2014; Miller, 2014). This is unfortunate because in reality such portrayals depict at best only a small percentage of the jobs in computer science and engineering (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). Yet high-school students report that their ideas about what scientists are like are influenced more by the media than by any other source (Steinke et al., 2007). Even brief exposures to television portrayals can influence attitudes toward the group portrayed (Weisbuch et al., 2009).

However, altering these stereotypes—by broadening the representation of the people who do this work, the work itself, and the environments in which it occurs—significantly increases girls' sense of belonging and interest in the field. Academic stereotypes thus serve as gatekeepers, driving girls away from certain fields and constraining their learning opportunities and career aspirations.

Acculturation, Assimilation, & Multiculturalism

There is tremendous ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity throughout Canada and the United States, largely resulting from a long history and ongoing identification as a “nation of immigrants” that attracted millions of newcomers from every continent. Still, elected officials and residents ardently disagree about how the United States should approach this diversity and incorporate immigrant, ethnic, and cultural minority groups into the larger framework of American society.

The fundamental question is whether cultural minority groups should be encouraged to forego their ethnic and cultural identities and **acculturate** to the values, traditions, and customs of mainstream culture or should be allowed and encouraged to retain key elements of their identities and heritages. This is a highly emotional question. Matters of cultural identity are often deeply personal and associated with strongly held beliefs about the defining features of their countries’ national identities.

Assimilation encourages and may even demand that members of ethnic and immigrant minority groups abandon their native customs, traditions, languages, and identities as quickly as possible and adopt those of mainstream society—“When in Rome, do as the Romans do.” Advocates of assimilation generally view a strong sense of national unity based on a shared linguistic and cultural heritage as the best way to promote a strong national identity and avoid ethnic conflict. They point, for example, to ethnic warfare and genocide in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s and to recent independence movements by French Canadians in Quebec and in Scotland as evidence of negative consequences of groups retaining a strong sense of loyalty and identification with their ethnic or linguistic communities. The “English as the Official Language” movement in the United States is another example. People are concerned that U.S. unity is weakened by immigrants who do not learn to speak English. In recent years, the U.S. Census Bureau has identified more than 300 languages spoken in the United States. In 2010, more than 60 million people representing 21 per cent of the total U.S. population spoke a language other than English at home and 38 million of those people spoke Spanish.

Cultural Concepts in Everyday Marketing

In marketing, when a product becomes removed or disassociated with its original ethnic group, we call this process **de-ethnicization**. These items become absorbed by a mainstream or dominant culture, much in the way bagels, pasta, and yoga have.

Belk, Wallendorf, & Sherry (1991) write that, “for many people, consumption has become a vehicle for achieving transcendent experiences.” Whether we are adorning ourselves with tattoos that carry meaning, symbol, and significance or bidding on a limited pair of custom Nike sneakers, consumer behaviour has deep roots in sacred consumption practices. While **sacralization** describes the process of everyday objects, people, or events developing sacred status (the locks of hair from my baby’s first haircut; the collar that belonged to my first pet; and, my grandmother’s Scrabble board that I inherited are all sacred items to me), **de-sacralization** describes the opposite of that. We see the erasure of sacred symbolism, or the de-sacralization of objects, people, or events, occur when sacred items become absorbed and commercialized in pop culture and the greater consumer culture.

Consider the over-hyped consumerism surrounding Halloween and Christmas. I once went to a (fabulous) brewery in the town Haarlem (The Netherlands) that used to be a former church! The term we apply to consumer objects and events are ordinary and absent of any sacred meaning or association is profane. **Profane consumption** is a term used to describe the kinds of purchases we make that are part of our everyday lives. Renewing my gym membership, attending a professional workshop, or picking up take-out on the way home from work are examples of profane consumption.

Multiculturalism takes a different view of assimilation, arguing that ethnic and cultural diversity is a positive quality that enriches a society and encouraging respect for cultural differences. The basic belief behind multiculturalism is that group differences, in and of themselves, do not spark tension, and society should promote tolerance for differences rather than urging members of immigrant, ethnic, and cultural minority groups to shed their customs and identities. Vivid examples of multiculturalism can be seen in major cities across the United States, such as New York, where ethnic neighborhoods such as Chinatown and Little Italy border one another, and Los Angeles, which features many diverse neighborhoods, including Little Tokyo, Koreatown, Filipinotown, Little Armenia, and Little Ethiopia.

The ultimate objective of multiculturalism is to promote peaceful coexistence while allowing each ethnic community to preserve its unique heritage and identity. Multiculturalism is the official governmental policy of Canada; it was codified in 1988 under the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, which declares that “multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance, and share their cultural heritage.”

Student Op-Ed: America, If You Had to Pick…The Statue of Liberty or a Bottle of Coke?

Coca-Cola's unrivaled and global success is primarily due to its ability to establish itself as an American cultural symbol. Solomon (2017, p.429) defines a symbol as an "object that represents something else" or a physical manifestation of a set of beliefs. In the case of Coca-Cola, the brand has long represented the western notions of freedom and individuality and is, to date, synonymous with American culture.

Coca-Cola's integration into mass culture in the U.S.A. speaks to its prominence and popularity within American culture. Consider the fact that in 1986 Atlanta, a parade was held to celebrate a joint-centennial of Coca-Cola and the Statue of Liberty (Lilienheim Angelico, 1998, Part III, 2:42—3.10). Furthermore, during the 1996 Atlanta Olympic games torch rally, the brand is displayed alongside and is in equal proportion to the Olympic rings (Lilienheim Angelico, 1998, Part III, 4:44 – 4:51). In both instances, Coca-Cola is positioned as a wholly celebrated American symbol of freedom and the American dream, one which is worthy of the world's attention. Not only does this signify the weight that the brand carries but it also demonstrates how a brand can establish its longevity by weaving itself into national culture.

Aside from its global recognition as an American symbol, Coca-Cola soon became a fortress brand, which Solomon (2017) defines as a brand that becomes embedded in our everyday life. In the same way that tea was a household drink in China, England or India or wine in Italy, Coca-Cola was a staple drink at dinner tables in the U.S.A. (Lilienheim Angelico, 1998, Part III, 3:52 – 4:18). According to the documentary, the average family in 1978 Rome, Georgia alone consumed 3,200 bottles of coke a year (Lilienheim Angelico, 1998, Part II, 14:05- 14:45).

If making your mark on the world stage or anchoring your product into a daily ritual wasn't enough to transform a brand into a global corporate giant, try shifting an entire culture. Brands are constantly shaped by cultural values and norms, however, the circular nature of this relationship also means that some brands have the power to influence culture and impact a society's value system. Haddon Sundblom's interpretation of St. Nicolas as an old, stout, and jolly man in a "Coca-Cola red" suit in a 1931 advertisement soon became the widely-accepted image of the holiday figure known today (Lilienheim Angelico, 1998, Part I, 21:15 – 21:46). Although, it originated as a concept for Coca-Cola's marketing, this image of Santa is one that is now ingrained in western culture.

While it is impressive that Coca-Cola has reached this status, I can't help but think of the immense influence that brands like Coca-Cola have on our lives and our culture, whether we know it or not. I was extremely shocked and a little disappointed to discover the origin story of the modern version of Santa Claus. The values of authenticity and tradition that I once attributed to the Christmas holiday seem to have disappeared now that I know the figure central to the holiday was but a mere character in a Coca-Cola advertisement. I understand that brands operate as capitalist entities in order to survive but it is concerning when their conscious marketing efforts inadvertently shift behaviours within culture or erode rich traditions and practices altogether.

Text Attributions

- The "Cultural Norms in Society" section; the "Culture is Learned" section; the "Culture: A Learning Process" section; and, the fourth paragraph under "Symbols, Myths, Rituals & Rites of Passage" are adapted from Biswas-Diener, R. & Thin, N. (2019). "Culture". In R. Biswas-Diener & E. Diener (Eds), *Noba textbook series: Psychology.* Champaign, IL: DEF publishers. DOI:nobaproject.com.
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CULTURE AND MARKETING

For as long as marketing has been a practiced profession, marketers have been creating stereotypes and perpetuating the wrongful depictions of gender and ethnic sub-cultures within a dominant Euro-Western context. An important theme in this book is the relationship between marketing and culture: this book seeks to identify how these two influence and inform one another. When marketers create products that draw on inaccurate stereotypes what impact do these have on society's perspectives and understanding of non-dominant cultures in Canada and the United States?

Bias, Stereotypes & Discrimination

People are often **biased** against others outside of their own social group, showing **prejudice** (*emotional bias*), **stereotypes** (*cognitive bias*), and **discrimination** (*behavioural bias*). In the past, people used to be more explicit with their biases, but during the 20th century, when it became less socially acceptable to exhibit bias, such things like prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination became more subtle (automatic, ambiguous, and ambivalent). In the 21st century, however, with social group categories even more complex, biases may be transforming once again.

Understanding Bias

Muslim
Indian
Criminal
Immigrant
Privileged
Queer

Whether we are aware of it or not (and usually we're not), we sort the world into "us" and "them" categories. We are more likely to great with bias or discrimination anyone we feel is outside our own group.

Most people like themselves well enough, and most people identify themselves as members of certain groups but not others. Logic suggests, then, that because we like ourselves, we therefore like the groups we associate with more, whether those groups are our hometown, school, religion, gender, or ethnicity. Liking yourself and your groups is human nature. The larger issue, however, is that **own-group preference** often results in liking other groups less. And whether you recognize this "favouritism" as wrong, this trade-off is relatively automatic, that is, unintended, immediate, and irresistible.

The Implications of Own-Group Preference

How might *own-group preference* influence the decisions we make as consumers? Perhaps it causes us to become loyal to particular brands or companies while completely omitting others from consideration? It may even influence us to the extent that we'll pay more for an item — looking past the more reasonably-priced generic option — to ensure that brand association reinforces our preferences. The role of own-group preference plays into our own self-concept which often informs our consumer decision making.

Own-group preference also influences our purchasing behaviours by holding us back from making excessive "impulse" buys: due to our need for extensive evaluation, we may require more time to ensure our decision is both informed and aligned with how we perceive ourselves as consumers and how we want others to perceive us. Brands play a powerful role in distinguishing us not only as individual consumers, but also as members of larger consumer groups.

Stereotypes in Marketing

It should come as no surprise that cultural stereotypes (the positive or negative beliefs that we hold about the characteristics of a racial or ethnic group) inform societal views in a way that does real harm to those affected. Stereotypes (*historical and contemporary*) have played a significant role in shaping peoples' attitudes towards others. Stereotypes are deeply embedded within many structures of our society such as education and entertainment. When stereotypes are used repeatedly in advertisements, television shows, Hollywood movies, and even depicted on cereal boxes, a young mind grows to accept them as reality. This reality not only shapes one's attitude, it directly effects how an adult judges and behaves towards others. Teachers, law makers, artists, religious leaders, designers, politicians, movie makers, and marketers have all had their attitudes shaped by stereotypes: over time, they accepted these stereotypes as an accurate reflection of the past and a indisputable image of society today. When we fail to address stereotypes we fail every member of our societies.

For this reason, the interconnection between marketing and culture is often easier to see than to break. More often than not, the burden of ending the creation and perpetuation of stereotypes falls to those targeted by the stereotyping. Everyone has a moral responsibility to call out stereotyping and seize to benefit and profit from it.

Stereotypes in Advertising

Advertisements have a long history of relying on *stereotypical* characters to promote products. For many years Aunt Jemima sold pancake mix and Rastus was a grinning Black chef who pitched Cream of Wheat hot cereal. The Gold Dust Twins were Black urchins who peddled a soap powder for Lever Brothers and Pillsbury hawked powdered drink mixes using characters such as "Injun Orange" and "Chinese Cherry"—who had buck teeth.

These negative depictions began to decline in the 1960s as the civil rights movement gave more power to racialized groups and their rising economic status began to command marketers' respect. Frito-Lay responded to protests by the Hispanic community and stopped using the "Frito Bandito" character in 1971, and Quaker Foods gave Aunt Jemima a makeover in 1968 (plaid headband) and in 1989 (pearl earrings and a lace collar) (Hsu, 2020; Westerman, 1989). As part of its fiftieth-anniversary celebration for Crest toothpaste, Procter & Gamble reintroduced its "Crest Kid," who first appeared in 1956 as a "white bread," apple-cheeked girl painted by artist Norman Rockwell. It's telling that the new Crest Kid is Cuban American.

Similarly, a recent campaign gives a radical makeover to the Black Uncle Ben character who appeared on rice packages for more than sixty years dressed as a servant. (White Southerners once used "uncle" and "aunt" as honorary names for older African Americans because they refused to address them as "Mr." and "Mrs.") The character is remade as Ben (just Ben), an accomplished businessman with an opulent office who shares his "grains of wisdom" about rice and life on the brand's web site (Elliot, 2007).

In 2020, the Aunt Jemima brand was in the spotlight again and called out for its continued use of both a racist name and imagery. This time, a TikTok video that went viral brought attention to the brand's racist history and Quaker Oats (owned by PepsiCo since 2001) announced that it would retire the name and change the packaging (Hsu, 2020).

These positive steps are motivated by both good intentions and pragmatism. Ethnic consumers spend more than $600 billion a year on products and services. Immigrants make up 10 per cent of the U.S. population, and California is less than half white. Advertisers and their agencies couldn't ignore this new reality even if they wanted to.

Cultural Appropriation

Cultural appropriation is defined as "the taking—from a culture that is not one's own—of intellectual property, cultural expressions or artifacts, history and ways of knowledge." (Ziff & Rao, 1997, p.1). There is increasing evidence that a culture's aspects are "borrowed" by outsiders that cause profound offense to insiders (Rogers, 2006; Young, 2005).

Sanga Song and Nokyeon Kim (2020) conducted qualitative research to understand students' perceptions and experiences with cultural appropriation and how they can be better informed through education. A total of 116 business students from the midwest (USA) participated in their study which involved discussion forum questions & answers and some follow-up interviews. Below are some of the findings from their research.

Recognizing & understanding: The respondents defined **cultural appropriation** as follows: (1) done by outsiders, (2) for their personal interest, (3) in an inappropriate or disrespectful way, (4) without knowing the background of the culture, and (5) without permission or acknowledgment. A lack of credit or appreciation of the original culture is the main issue of cultural appropriation (Rogers, 2006). Respondents also pointed out that, as opposed to cultural appreciation, which embraces the history behind a specific ritual or belief and cherishes it respectively, cultural appropriation takes artifacts or cultural property without permission to exploit it in ways that are disapproved.

Applying & analyzing: Respondents shared various examples of cultural appropriation they experienced in their daily lives. Examples included sports teams (e.g., Washington Redskins) using Native American tribal names or images as mascots, fashion brands (e.g., Gucci, Marc Jacobs) showcasing white models wearing Sikh turbans or faux dreadlocks, computer games (e.g., Far Cry 3, Overwatch) inspired by Maori and Samoan cultures, and white artists in historically African American music genres (e.g., Hip-Hop, Reggae, R&B). Respondents also identified several instances of cultural appropriation from celebrity cases (e.g., Kim Kardashians' cornrows, Katy Perry's geisha costume, Rhianna's chola makeup, Zac Efron's dreadlocks) to ordinary people wearing Navajo headdresses or henna tattoos at music festivals or Native American Halloween costumes. This could be harmful, as they misrepresent or create racial stereotypes of already marginalized or colonized cultures (Rogers, 2006).

Evaluating & creating: To avoid appropriating or misrepresenting a culture or community, respondents indicated that education is the most important. Respondents suggested that marketers or designers should research the history of a culture before deciding to use its elements. Respondents also recommended that working with diverse groups at school or at work would be helpful in understanding and experiencing different cultures. Testing a design or advertisement with people of diverse backgrounds before releasing it to the public was also recommended.

Cultural Appropriation & Indigenous Mascots

In 2018, Teen Vote writer Heather Davidson wrote an op-ed entitled, "How Racism Against Native People Is Normalized, From Mascots to Costumes" bringing this important topic into the spotlight once again. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples have been raising this issue for a long time, but often their explanations have either gone ignored or unheard. Davidson, a Dena'ina Athabascan and Unangan (Aleutian) who lives in California made clear in her piece that Indigenous Mascots and Native costumes are more than an act of ignorance — they are an act of colonial violence.

Cultural appropriation occurs when, "our images, symbols, and cultures are used as commodities and novelties. Natives are used as logos, from butter packaging to cigarettes to baking soda to clothing. Natives are used as Halloween costumes. Native tribe names are used by the U.S. military as names for weapons. Native tribe names are used as names for vehicles. Natives are used as mascots for spots teams" (Davidson, 2018).

Cultural appropriation is a form of racism that has become "normalized," argues Davidson. Settler Canadians and Americans have become so conditioned to seeing appropriated images and hearing appropriated names that we often fail to identify it and call it out. In 2019, Mariah Gladstone, Amskapiikuni, Tsalagi *(Blackfeet, Cherokee)* wrote a Twitter thread about the harm behind the use of Native mascots in sports and how their use exasperates racism. Mariah and I transformed her thread into the piece below so students could better understand how cultural appropriation is a harmful practice that must end.

The Problems with Indigenous Mascots

Feeling the need to make a Twitter thread on WHY Native mascots are harmful (and no, it's not about our delicate little feelings). The following is a summary on some of the actual effects of these mascots.

Clinical psychologist Michael Friedman, the author of, "The Harmful Psychological Effects of the Washington Football Mascot" stated in his report that, "[a] series of studies show that if Native Americans are shown images of stereotypical Native American mascots…self-esteem goes down, belief in community goes down, belief in achievement goes down, and mood goes down" (Friedman, n.d.).

Friedman's study also gives evidence to how Native mascots exacerbates racism. "Similarly, if someone who is non-Native American sees a stereotypical image of a Native American mascot, their association with the Native American community also gets worse" (Friedman, n.d.).

Beyond the studies, we also recognize that the representation of Native people as mascots is often homogenous (presents all tribes as interchangeable), historical (pre-1900 at least), and highly stereotyped. The result of such displays are the perception that all Indigenous nations have the same cultural identifiers, that we exist only in the past, and that we are "savage," warlike, or stoic (see: Noble Indian trope).

When young people (both Native and non-Native) are exposed to these images, they internalize their idea of what Native people are supposed to be. Clearly, the belief in homogeneous Indian figures harms our representation and challenges our ability to communicate issues facing our specific communities. Obviously, it also contributes to other cultural mishmashes (see: Victoria Secret model w/ headdress, leopard print, turquoise). The general concept of Native People as existing only in the past is something I find especially damaging. It is perpetuated across media, including the textbooks. In fact… "A staggering 87 per cent of references to American Indians in all 50 states' academic standards portray them in a pre-1900 context" (Wade, 2017).

What effect does this have on us now? Great question! Obviously it means that Native issues are ignored. Few individuals have Indigenous issues on their radar at all. Thanks to Michael Friedman's report and Lisa Wade's examination of the effects of Indigenous erasure in our school system, the data tell us that when Indigenous issues are acknowledged, people are inclined to think of us in a negative light. Which brings me to that pesky notion that we are "savage." Or silent. Or spiritual and talk to wolves and eagles. These are all hurdles to gaining traction when first we must dismantle stereotypes about ourselves.

In 2013, NPR's *Tell Me More* host Michel Martin spoke with Michael Friedman and NPR science correspondent Shankar Vedantam about the research Friedman conducted regarding the impacts of Indigenous mascots. "[The data help] us get past what's been a constant refrain in the debate over these mascots. One side says, ‘Look, we’re offended.’ The other side says, ‘Look, we don’t mean to give any offense.’ And you end up with a he-said, she-said battle of opinions” (“Can a Mascot,” 2013).

Vedantam goes on to say that, “[t]he data seem to show at a pretty general level that there is a disconnect between how people think about these issues consciously and unconsciously.” You can have a positive view of Native mascots but unconsciously they are still causing harm. In summary, this isn’t about our delicate snowflake dispositions, but rather, the actual measurable harm that Native mascots have on our communities. No amount of “get over it” will change that. Now that you’re armed with all this wonderful knowledge, go out in the world and use it to make a difference.

To learn more, visit the links below and the ones used in this thread.

- Missoulian News
- University at Buffalo
- American Psychological Association’s statement on Native mascots
- Huffington Post

Readers can also access an interactive map showing the scope of Indigenous mascots used throughout the United States by accessing, “Native American Mascots Database.”
By Mariah Gladstone (2019)
Amskapiikuni, Tsalagi (Blackfeet, Cherokee)
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OUR CHILDREN HAVE TO LIVE UNDER THE KIND OF RACIST ATTITUDES THAT ARE EXPRESSED-THROUGH "MASCOT-RACISM IN-SPORTS"....
-FLOYD "RED CROW" WESTERMAN...
•IN THE SPIRIT OF RED CROW•
NOT YOUR MASCOT!
red skin noun dated - OFFENSIVE Look it up!!!!
WE ARE NOT YOUR MASCOT
We Come in PEACE
NO HONOR IN RACISM
CHANGE THE NAME
NOT YOUR MASCOT!

NOT YOUR MASCOT

Racist mascots depicting Indigenous stereotypes impact Indigenous People negatively (their health, well-being, and connection to community) and serve to only exacerbate racism and racist beliefs by non-Indigenous people.

Capitalism & Consumer Culture

In my early days working as a Brand Strategist, I recall using a line in our workshops and educational materials around branding: “if you’re not a brand you’re a commodity.” Over-simplified and lacking nuance, the essence of this statement was that brands fulfill consumers’ needs and wants above and beyond providing a mere utilitarian function. The branding and advertising industry is based on not only satisfying consumers’ needs and wants, but also fabricating them when they don’t exist (consider the cola market and Chia Pets). Branding allows competitors to differentiate one another based on positioning, status, uniqueness, values, personality, image, and other non-tangible qualities.

While *consumerism* is defined as a social practice and process of consuming goods that are intended for exchange (Ertman & Williams, 2005), **consumer capitalism** is, “a particular type of society permeated with unjust class structures and social lives dominated by consumer lifestyles, wherein a person’s well-being and happiness depend, to a large extent on their consumption habits (Bauman, 2005, 2007, 2009).” Quentin Wheeler-Bell (2014) explains further that consumer capitalism is tied to profit maximization and the reconfiguring of social spaces such as schools, the Internet, media outlets, and even the body.

Consumer capitalism is most evident in the changes we see in consumer behaviour and mass marketing (or advertising) over the last century. The emphasis change has gone from consumer “needs” to consumer “wants” and beyond that, an anticipation of how those wants will further evolve. Marketers anticipate these wants by designing and launching brands that become the “next best thing” and a “solution to a problem” you never knew you had in the first place.

Consumer capitalism combines profit maximization with a consumer’s self-concept in the practice of marketing beauty, diet, and fashion products that encourage buyers to (re)create their identities. Wheeler-Bell calls this the “pleasurable, expressive and performative aspect of the consumer” an integral part of the capitalism structure. We see this same type of consumer culture play out in the environmental movement where consumers purchase products to support their own identity and consumer narrative of being “environmental conscious” or “free-trade” supportive when the very system in which they consume is structured on inequality, exploitation, and profit maximization.

In actuality, consumer capitalism lures consumers into making purchases that reinforce narratives that can be racist (the “Noble Savage”), normalize racial segregation (“ethnically correct Barbie dolls”), and exasperate inequalities (“Darjeeling Tea”). Explore these topics more in the pieces below.

The Myth of the Ecologically Noble Savage

Indigenous People have been the subject of many different racist stereotypes that put their lives and well-being in danger, even today.

The image of the noble savage developed many centuries ago in Western culture. From the beginning of European exploration and colonialism, Europeans described the "natives" they encountered primarily in negative terms, associating them with sexual promiscuity, indolence, cannibalism, and violence. The depictions changed as Romantic artists and writers rejected modernity and industrialization and called for people to return to an idealized, simpler past. That reactionary movement also celebrated Indigenous societies as simple people living in an Eden-like state of innocence. French painter Paul Gauguin's works depicting scenes from his travels to the South Pacific are typical of this approach in their celebration of the colorful, easygoing, and natural existence of the natives. The continuing influence of these stories is evident in Disney's portrayal of Pocahontas and James Cameron's 2009 film Avatar in which the primitive Na`vi are closely connected to and defenders of an exotic and vibrant natural world. Cameron's depiction, which includes a sympathetic anthropologist, criticizes Western capitalism as willing to destroy nature for profit.

Despite its positive portrayals of Indigenous groups, the idea of the ecologically noble savage tends to treat Indigenous Peoples as an imagined “Other” constructed as the opposite of Western culture rather than endeavoring to understand the world views and complexities of Indigenous cultures. Similarly, a naive interpretation of Indigenous environmentalism may merely project an imaginary Western ideal onto another culture rather than make a legitimate observation about that culture on its own terms.

Transforming Barbie Dolls

Ethnically correct dolls and toys have often reinforced segregation and haven't address systemic problems involving race and class.

Consumers in capitalist systems continuously attempt to reshape the meaning of the commodities that businesses brand, package, and market to us. The anthropologist Elizabeth Chin conducted ethnographic research among young African American children in a poor neighborhood of New Haven, Connecticut, exploring the intersection of consumption, inequality, and cultural identity. Chin specifically looked at "ethnically correct" Barbie dolls, arguing that while they may represent some progress in comparison to the past when only white Barbies were sold, they also reinforce outdated understandings of biological race and ethnicity. Rather than dismantling race and class boundaries, the "ethnic" dolls create segregated toy shelves that in fact mirror the segregation that young black children experience in their schools and neighborhoods.

The young black girls that Chin researched were unable to afford these $20 brand-name dolls and typically played with less expensive, generic Barbie dolls that were white. The girls used their imaginations and worked to transform their dolls by giving them hairstyles like their own, braiding and curling the dolls' long straight hair in order to integrate the dolls into their own worlds. A quick perusal of the Internet reveals numerous tutorials and blogs devoted to black Barbie hair styling, demonstrating that the young New Haven girls are not the only ones working to transform these store-bought commodities in socially meaningful ways.

Darjeeling Tea

Colonialism created unequal systems around the world and consumer capitalism may not benefit those most impact by colonial systems.

The anthropologist Sarah Besky researched Darjeeling tea production in India to better understand how consumer desires are mapped onto distant locations. In India, tea plantation owners are attempting to reinvent their product for 21st century markets through the use of fair-trade certification and Geographical Indication Status (GI). GI is an international property-rights system, regulated by the World Trade Organization, that legally protects the rights of people in certain places to produce certain commodities. For example, bourbon must come from Kentucky, Mezcal can only be produced in certain parts of Mexico, and sparkling wine can only be called champagne if it originated in France.

Similarly, in order to legally be sold as "Darjeeling tea," the tea leaves must come from the Darjeeling district of the Indian state of West Bengal. Besky explores how the meaning of Darjeeling tea is created through three interrelated processes: (1) extensive marketing campaigns aimed at educating consumers about the unique Darjeeling taste, (2) the application of international law to define the geographic borders within which Darjeeling tea can be produced, and (3) the introduction of tea plantation-based tourism.

What the Darjeeling label hides is the fact that tea plantations are highly unequal systems with economic relationships that date back to the colonial era: workers depend upon plantation owners not just for money but also for food, medical care, schools, and housing. Even when we pay more for Darjeeling tea, the premium price is not always returned to the workers in the form of higher wages. Bescky's research shows how capitalism and market exchange shapes the daily lives of people around the world.

The work of a conscientious and responsible marketer is rarely seen in popular Hollywood films and HBO television series. There is an excess of glam, glitz, and spontaneous creativity, which seduces the young copy writer or designer into the industry that is measure by market share, profits, and share value. Both on and off-screen, there is a real representation problem in marketing and advertising. The industry is dominated by straight, white, men who have shaped our cultural and understanding of cultural norms through marketing imagery and messages. Female, BIPOC, disabled, and transgender consumers (just to name a few) are absent from the creative briefs and market research which lead to further representation problems.

I have long asked of my marketing students to examine the work of marketers outside of a capitalism framework: who is doing the work, who is getting hurt by the work, and who is most benefiting from the work? Marketing educators have a duty to emphasize to our students that the work of marketers should be considered a privilege, not a right. If we take our work seriously and engage in it more responsibly, there should be no excuses for perpetuating stereotypes, exploiting inequalities, and leading with bias.

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GENDER AND CULTURE

Racial stereotypes are not the only issue facing consumers today: the use of **gender** stereotypes in marketing and advertising are also in need of elimination. The wrongful depiction of genders has manifested into systemic discrimination; prolific inequality and inequity; and profoundly negative effects on self-esteem and self-worth. Whether the marketing examples depict rape culture, hyper-sexualized girls, or toxic masculinity, gender stereotypes are shaping attitudes and informing judgements and behaviour. Gender, as we've come to understand it, is in fact merely a fabricated identity!

The terms sex and gender are frequently used interchangeably, though they have different meanings. In this context, sex refers to the biological category of male or female, as defined by physical differences in genetic composition and in reproductive anatomy and function. On the other hand, gender refers to the cultural, social, and psychological meanings that are associated with masculinity and femininity (Wood & Eagly, 2002). You can think of "male" and "female" as distinct categories of sex (a person is typically born a male or a female), but "masculine" and "feminine" as continuums associated with gender (everyone has a certain degree of masculine and feminine traits and qualities).

Beyond sex and gender, there are a number of related terms that are also often misunderstood. Gender roles are the behaviors, attitudes, and personality traits that are designated as either masculine or feminine in a given culture. It is common to think of gender roles in terms of gender stereotypes, or the beliefs and expectations people hold about the typical characteristics, preferences, and behaviors of men and women. A person's gender identity refers to their psychological sense of being male or female. In contrast, a person's sexual orientation is the direction of their emotional and erotic attraction toward members of the opposite sex, the same sex, or both sexes.

Gender, Identity, & Sex

Historically, the terms gender and sex have been used interchangeably. Because of this, gender is often viewed as a binary – a person is either male *or* female – and it is assumed that a person's gender matches their biological sex. This is not always the case, however, and more recent research has separated these two terms. While the majority of people do identify with the gender that matches their biological sex (cisgender), an estimated 0.6% of the population identify with a gender that does not match their biological sex (transgender; Flores, Herman, Gates, & Brown, 2016). For example, an individual who is biologically male may identify as female, or vice versa.

In addition to separating gender and sex, recent research has also begun to conceptualize gender in ways beyond the gender binary. Genderqueer or gender nonbinary are umbrella terms used to describe a wide range of individuals who do not identify with and/or conform to the gender binary. These terms encompass a variety of more specific labels individuals may use to describe themselves. Some common labels are genderfluid, agender, and bigender. An individual who is genderfluid may identify as male, female, both, or neither at different times and in different circumstances. An individual who is agender may have no gender or describe themselves as having a neutral gender, while bigender individuals identify as two genders.

It is important to remember that sex and gender do not always match and that gender is not always binary; however, a large majority of prior research examining gender has not made these distinctions. As such, the following sections will discuss gender as a binary.

The Enculturation Process

We now understand that cultures, not nature, create the gender ideologies that go along with being born male or female and the ideologies vary widely, cross-culturally. What is considered "man's work" in some societies, such as carrying heavy loads, or farming, can be "woman's work" in others. What is "masculine" and "feminine" varies: pink and blue, for example, are culturally invented gender-color linkages, and skirts and "make-up" can be worn by men, indeed by "warriors."

Masculinity studies goes beyond men and their roles to explore the relational aspects of gender. One focus is the **enculturation** processes through which boys learn about and learn to perform "manhood." Many U.S. studies (and several excellent videos, such as Tough Guise by Jackson Katz), have examined the role of popular culture in teaching boys our culture's key concepts of masculinity, such as being "tough" and "strong," and shown how this "tough guise" stance affects men's relationships with women, with other men, and with societal institutions, reinforcing a culture of violent masculinity. Sociologist Michael Kimmel has further suggested that boys are taught that they live in a “perilous world” he terms “Guyland.”

Smoking Advertisements and Women

Marketing to women has often been out-dated and out-of-touch reflecting a male dominance in the advertising industry.

In 1968, a cigarette company in the United States decided to target women as tobacco consumers and used a clever marketing campaign to entice them to take up smoking. “You’ve come a long way, baby!” billboards proclaimed. Women, according to the carefully constructed rhetoric, had moved away from their historic oppressed status and could — and should — now enjoy the full complement of twentieth-century consumer pleasures. Like men, they deserved to enjoy themselves and relax with a cigarette. The campaigns were extremely successful; within several years, smoking rates among women had increased dramatically. But had women really come a long way? We now know that tobacco (including in vaporized form) is a highly addictive substance and that its use is correlated with a host of serious health conditions. In responding to the marketing rhetoric, women moved into a new sphere of bodily pleasure and possibly enjoyed increased independence, but they did so at a huge cost to their health. They also succumbed to a long-term financial relationship with tobacco companies who relied on addicting individuals in order to profit. Knowing about the structures at work behind the scenes and the risks they took, few people today would agree that women's embrace of tobacco represented a huge step forward.

Perhaps saying "You've come a long way, baby!" with the cynical interpretation with which we read it today can serve as an analogy for our contemporary explorations of gender and culture. Certainly, many women in the United States today enjoy heightened freedoms. We can travel to previously forbidden spaces, study disciplines long considered the domain of men, shape our families to meet our own needs, work in whatever field we choose, and, we believe, live according to our own wishes. But we would be naive to ignore how gender continues to shape, constrain, and inform our lives. The research and methods of anthropology can help us become more aware of the ongoing consequences of our gendered heritage and the ways in which we are all complicit in maintaining gender ideologies that limit and restrict people's possibilities.

By committing to speak out against subtle, gender-based discrimination and to support those struggling along difficult paths, today's anthropologists can emulate pioneers such as Franz Boas and Margaret Mead, who sought to fuse research and action. May we all be kinder to those who differ from the norm, whatever that norm may be. Only then will we all — women, men and those who identify with neither category — have truly come a long way. (But we will leave the infantilizing "baby" to those tobacco companies!)

Gender Stereotyping

How do our gender roles and gender stereotypes develop and become so strong? Many of our gender stereotypes are so strong because we emphasize gender so much in culture (Bigler & Liben, 2007). For example, males and females are treated differently before they are even born. When someone learns of a new pregnancy, the first question asked is "Is it a boy or a girl?" Immediately upon hearing the answer, judgments are made about the child: Boys will be rough and like blue, while girls will be delicate and like pink.

Different treatment by gender begins with parents. A meta-analysis of research from the United States and Canada found that parents most frequently treated sons and daughters differently by encouraging gender-stereotypical activities (Lytton & Romney, 1991). Fathers, more than mothers, are particularly likely to encourage gender-stereotypical play, especially in sons. Children do a large degree of socializing themselves. By age 3, children play in gender-segregated play groups and expect a high degree of conformity. Children who are perceived as gender atypical (i.e., do not conform to gender stereotypes) are more likely to be bullied and rejected than their more gender-conforming peers. Gender stereotypes typically maintain gender inequalities in society.

How does marketing contribute to gender stereotypes, and thus gender inequalities in society? Well, have you been to a children's toy store recently? There is a clear delineation between "girls'" toys and "boys'" toys when you walk down the aisles. How do children's toys reinforce stereotypes and contribute to enculturation? Explore the op-ed below to learn more about how sex-typed products work against gender equality.

Student Op-Ed: Child's Play Solving Adult Problems

Despite the recent promising efforts to dispel ancient gender norms, there is one place you're bound to find them ever present. If you haven't been inside a toy store lately, prepare yourself for a clear delineation between the genders. **Sex-typed** children's toys simply reinforce already entrenched gender roles and stereotypes, which only confine play and restrict imagination. According to Solomon (2017), these are toys with masculine or feminine attributes that align with and reinforce gender archetypes, which may influence children to form identities that fit these molds. On the other hand, gender-non-specific toys foster agency and collaboration and encourage children to create and imagine freely.

In an episode of Abstract; The Art of Design, Cas Holman, the inventor of Rigamajig and Geemo, states that the toys in the market are too prescribed; they underestimate how sophisticated children are and restrict play to the confines of a gender binary (Chai Vasarhelyi, 2019). The need for toys to be sorted by gender illustrates the concept of uncertainty avoidance, which Solomon (2017) regards as society's intolerance and avoidance of uncertainty and ambiguity. However, Holman stands in opposition to this need for predictability. She contends that deep learning takes place when children discover something on their own, without the aid of color-coding or rigid instructions (Chai Vasarhelyi, 2019). This is a part of Holman's greater philosophy: "Easy is boring" (Chai Vasarhelyi, 2019, 41:53). Most toy manufacturers today make toys that do not encourage critical thinking; typically, there is only one way to play with these toys, which children find boring after a while (Chai Vasarhelyi, 2019). According to the designer, it is "not something children get something out of" (Chai Vasarhelyi, 2019, 12:22).

Sex-typed toys expose children to gender stereotypes, reinforce binary role playing and fail to foster collaborative and imaginative play among different genders. In many cultures where a gender binary is fundamental to identity formation, children grow up adhering to **enacted norms**. These might prescribe what boys and girls should and should not do, thereby defining children's abilities and the expectations placed upon them. In fulfilling these roles, children receive positive reinforcement and encouragement to maintain these identities as they mature. Here, the notion of **enculturation** also comes into effect, which refers to the processes of learning the beliefs and behaviours embedded within a dominant culture (Solomon, 2017). Holman states that children, through play, learn to be either hyper-masculine or hyper-feminine because those are the only options available (Chai Vasarhelyi, 2019). The designer condemns this – "There are children who like pink, and children who like blue. Why have we assigned that to boys and girls? It's absurd" (Chai Vasarhelyi, 2019, 28:34). Note the themes of violence and power that can be attributed to G.I. Joe advertisements, which rely on production elements such as rock music, bold color tones, and a narrator using his lowest, 'manliest' voice to present a hyper-masculine model of a man. Conversely, the use of pink tones in Barbie ads, the focus on appearance and servitude, as well as the sexualization of the doll create norms for what it is to be a girl in western society.

Holman argues that toys should encourage learning and creativity rather than assigning roles. She believes that good toys help children grow to become good people (Chai Vasarhelyi, 2019). In this sense, gender-non-specific toys help children develop a sense of agency; they are free to form and execute their own ideas, which encourages deep learning (Chai Vasarhelyi, 2019). Based on children's reactions to playing with Rigamajig, a giant wooden construction set, Holman concludes that children appreciate being entrusted with responsibility; they are playing with real material and are free to build something larger than themselves (Chai Vasarhelyi, 2019). These open-ended toys encourage thinking outside gender archetypes and foster collaboration and team building from an early age (Chai Vasarhelyi, 2019). According to Holman, "if we can play together, we can live together" (Chai Vasarhelyi, 2019, 43:31).

Growing up, I would sneak over to my neighbor's home and play with her giant Barbie collection. We would build homes out of Lego and create a whole imaginary life. I also vividly remember, my parents forbidding me to play with dolls because, "that's not what boys do." That was the first time I noticed the different expectations placed on boys and girls. More so than playing with dolls, I enjoyed the time I spent with my neighbor. Looking back, I smile thinking about the imaginative stories we used to create and the mini-plays we'd put on for anyone we could perform to. For this reason, I think it's incredibly important that children have as many options as possible to play and collaborate together, rather than separately. The hyper-masculine and hyper-feminine notions of what it is to be a boy and a girl, simply perpetuate stereotypes and contribute to gender inequality. The variation in personalities, preferences, and ideas among children is far too complex to fit into these limited binary selection of mainstream toys today. Gender-non-specific toys, on the other hand, encourages limitless play, unbounded by the confines of gender norms. As a result, it fosters valuable life-long skills like creativity, agency and, collaboration.

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SUBCULTURES

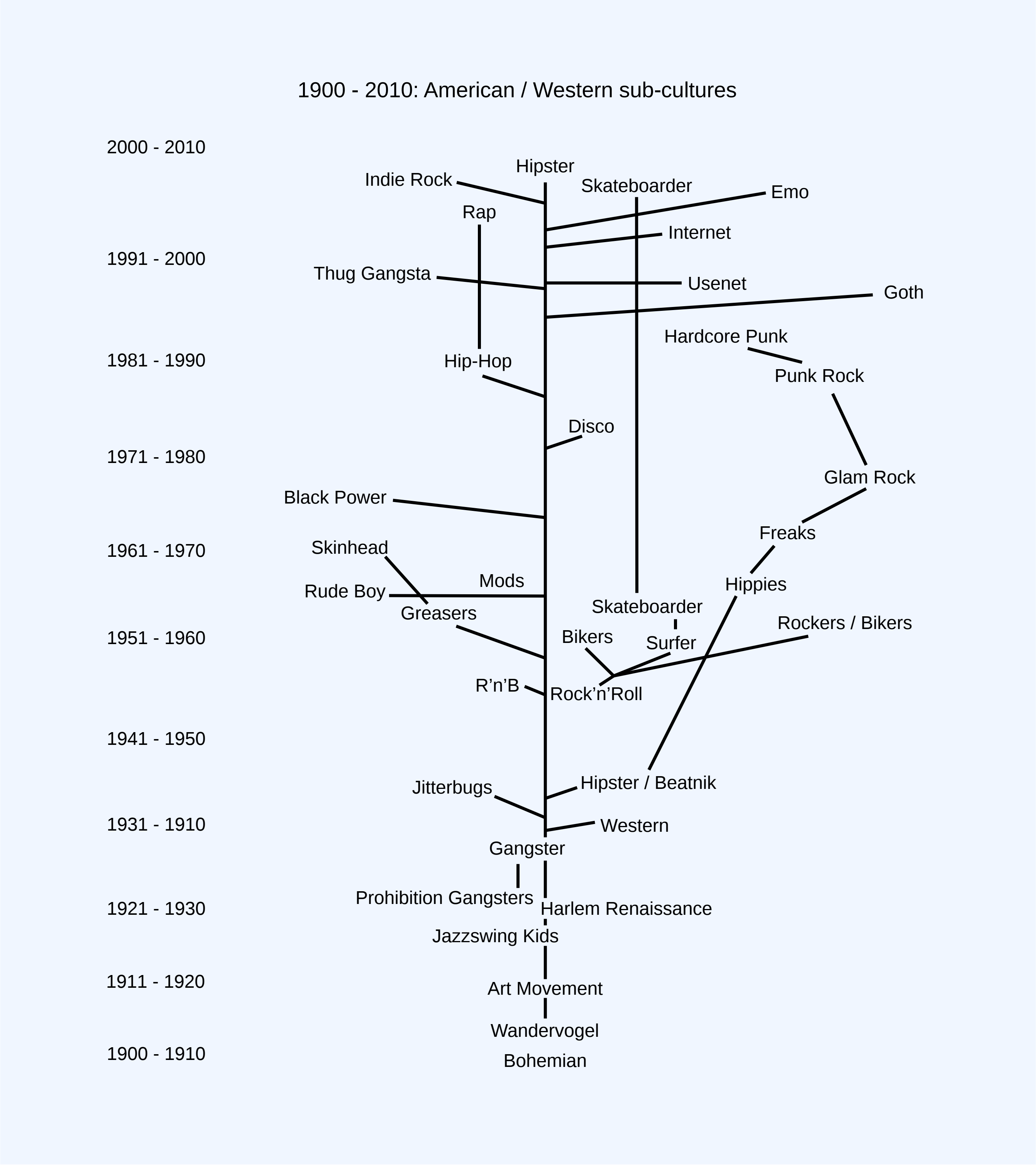
A **subculture** is a group of people who share a set of secondary values, such as environmentalists. Many factors can place an individual in one or several subcultures. People of a subculture are part of a larger culture but also share a specific identity within a smaller group.

Important Factors Comprising "Subculture"

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://iastate.pressbooks.pub/fashionapparelcb/?p=156#h5p-21

- Material Culture: People with similar income may create a subculture. The poor, the affluent, and the white-collar middle class are examples of material subcultures.
- Social Institutions: Those who participate in a social institution may form a subculture. Examples include participation in marriage, parenthood, a retirement community, or the army.
- Belief System: People with shared beliefs may create a subculture, such as a religious group or political party. For example, traditional Amish do not use electricity and automobiles.
- Aesthetics: Artistic people often form a subculture of their own associated with their common interests, such as art, music, dance, drama, and folklore.
- Language: People with similar dialects, accents, and vocabulary can form a subculture. Southerners and Northerners are two traditional categories in the U.S.

Thousands of subcultures exist within Canada and the United States. Ethnic and racial groups share the language, food, and customs of their heritage. Other subcultures are united by shared experiences. Biker culture revolves around a dedication to motorcycles. Some subcultures are formed by members who possess traits or preferences that differ from the majority of a society's population. The body modification community embraces aesthetic additions to the human body, such as tattoos, piercings, and certain forms of plastic surgery. In Canada and the United States, adolescents often form subcultures to develop a shared youth identity. Alcoholics Anonymous offers support to those suffering from alcoholism. But even as members of a subculture band together, they still identify with and participate in the larger society.


1900 - 2010: American / Western sub-cultures
2000 - 2010
Hipster
Indie Rock
Skateboarder
Emo
Rap
Internet
1991 - 2000
Thug Gangsta
Usenet
Goth
Hardcore Punk
1981 - 1990
Hip-Hop
Punk Rock
Disco
1971 - 1980
Glam Rock
Black Power
Freaks
1961 - 1970
Skinhead
Mods
Hippies
Rude Boy
Greasers
Skateboarder
Rockers / Bikers
Bikers
Surfer
1951 - 1960
R'n'B
Rock'n'Roll
1941 - 1950
Jitterbugs
Hipster / Beatnik
1931 - 1910
Western
Gangster
Prohibition Gangsters
1921 - 1930
Harlem Renaissance
Jazzswing Kids
1911 - 1920
Art Movement
Wandervogel
1900 - 1910
Bohemian

Consumption Subcultures

College and university-aged students represent both an age-cohort and a subculture who may share similar consumption needs and wants.

Subcultures, such as college students, can develop in response to people's interests, similarities, and behaviours that allow marketing professionals to design specific products for them. You have probably heard of the "sneakerhead" subculture; hip-hop subculture; people who in engage in extreme types of sports such as helicopter skiing; or, those who play the fantasy game Dungeons and Dragons.

Many people might be surprised to know that the Hipster subculture dates back to the early 1900's and is a unique subculture that has evolved over the last century.

The Evolution of American Hipster Subculture

Skinny jeans, chunky glasses, and T-shirts with vintage logos—the American hipster is a recognizable figure in the modern United States. Based predominately in metropolitan areas, sometimes clustered around hotspots such as the Williamsburg neighborhood in New York City, hipsters define themselves through a rejection of the mainstream. As a subculture, hipsters spurn many of the values and beliefs of U.S. culture and prefer vintage clothing to fashion and a bohemian lifestyle to one of wealth and power. While hipster culture may seem to be the new trend among young, middle-class youth, the history of the group stretches back to the early decades of the 1900s.

Where did the hipster culture begin? In the early 1940s, jazz music was on the rise in the United States. Musicians were known as "hepcats" and had a smooth, relaxed quality that went against upright, mainstream life. Those who were "hep" or "hip" lived by the code of jazz, while those who were "square" lived according to society's rules. The idea of a "hipster" was born.

The hipster movement spread, and young people, drawn to the music and fashion, took on attitudes and language derived from the culture of jazz. Unlike the vernacular of the day, hipster slang was purposefully ambiguous. When hipsters said, "It's cool, man," they meant not that everything was good, but that it was the way it was.

CLUB TROUBA

In the 1940s, U.S. hipsters were associated with the “cool” culture of jazz.

By the 1950s, the jazz culture was winding down and many traits of hepcat culture were becoming mainstream. A new subculture was on the rise. The “Beat Generation,” a title coined by writer Jack Kerouac, were anti-conformist and anti-materialistic. They were writers who listened to jazz and embraced radical politics. They bummed around, hitchhiked the country, and lived in squalor.

The lifestyle spread. College students, clutching copies of Kerouac’s *On the Road*, dressed in berets, black turtlenecks, and black-rimmed glasses. Women wore black leotards and grew their hair long. Herb Caen, a San Francisco journalist, used the suffix from *Sputnik 1*, the Russian satellite that orbited Earth in 1957, to dub the movement’s followers “Beatniks.” As the Beat Generation faded, a new, related movement began. It too focused on breaking social boundaries, but it also advocated freedom of expression, philosophy, and love. It took its name from the generations before; in fact, some theorists claim that Beats themselves coined the term to describe their children. Over time, the “little hipsters” of the 1970s became known simply as “hippies.”

Today’s generation of hipsters rose out of the hippie movement in the same way that hippies rose from Beats and Beats from hepcats. Although contemporary hipsters may not seem to have much in common with 1940s hipsters, the emulation of nonconformity is still there. In 2010, sociologist Mark Greif set about investigating the hipster subculture of the United States and found that much of what tied the group members together was not based on fashion, musical taste, or even a specific point of contention with the mainstream. “All hipsters play at being the inventors or first adopters of novelties,” Greif wrote. “Pride comes from knowing, and deciding, what’s cool in advance of the rest of the world. Yet the habits of hatred and accusation are endemic to hipsters because they feel the weakness of everyone’s position—including their own” (Greif 2010). Much as the hepcats of the jazz era opposed common culture with carefully crafted appearances of coolness and relaxation, modern hipsters reject mainstream values with a purposeful apathy.

Young people are often drawn to oppose mainstream conventions, even if in the same way that others do. Ironic, cool to the point of non-caring, and intellectual, hipsters continue to embody a subculture, while simultaneously impacting mainstream culture.

Subcultures, according to social media expert Scott Huntington, are often targeted to generate revenue, explaining that, “it’s common to assume that subcultures aren’t a major market for most companies. Online apps for shopping, however, have made significant strides. Take Etsy, for example. It only allows vendors to sell handmade or vintage items, both of which can be considered a rather "hipster" subculture. However, retailers on the site made almost $900 million in sales" (Post, n.d.).

Race & Ethnicity as Subcultures

When subcultures are discussed in the context of race and ethnicity it's important to first understand these concepts clearly.

The terms race and ethnicity are similar and there is a degree of overlap between them. The average person frequently uses the terms "race" and "ethnicity" interchangeably as synonyms and anthropologists also recognize that race and ethnicity are overlapping concepts. Both race and ethnic identity draw on an identification with others based on common ancestry and shared cultural traits. A **race** is a social construction that defines groups of humans based on arbitrary physical and/or biological traits that are believed to distinguish them from other humans. An **ethnic group**, on the other hand, claims a distinct identity based on cultural characteristics and a shared ancestry that are believed to give its members a unique sense of peoplehood or heritage. The cultural characteristics used to define ethnic groups vary; they include specific languages spoken, religions practiced, and distinct patterns of dress, diet, customs, holidays, and other markers of distinction. In some societies, ethnic groups are geographically concentrated in particular regions, as with the Kurds in Turkey and Iraq and the Basques in northern Spain.

Many individuals view their ethnicity as an important element of their personal and social identity. Numerous psychological, social, and familial factors play a role in ethnicity, and ethnic identity is most accurately understood as a range or continuum populated by people at every point. One's sense of ethnicity can also fluctuate across time. Children of Korean immigrants living in an overwhelmingly white town, for example, may choose to self-identify simply as "American" during their middle school and high school years to fit in with their classmates and then choose to self-identify as "Korean," "Korean American," or "Asian American" in college or later in life as their social settings change or from a desire to connect more strongly with their family history and heritage. Do you consider your ethnicity an important part of your identity? Why do you feel the way you do?

A few traditions, such as favorite family recipes or distinct customs associated with the celebration of a holiday, that originated in their homelands may be retained by family members across generations, reinforcing a sense of ethnic heritage and identity today. More recent immigrants are likely to retain more of the language and cultural traditions of their countries of origin. Non-European immigrants groups from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and the Caribbean also experience significant linguistic and cultural losses over generations, but may also continue to self-identify with their ethnic backgrounds if they do not feel fully incorporated into U.S, society because they "stick out" physically from Euro-American society and experience prejudice and discrimination. Psychological, sociological, and anthropological studies have indicated that retaining a strong sense of ethnic pride and identification is common among ethnic minorities in the United States and other nations as a means of coping with and overcoming societal bigotry.

“Dude, what are you?!”

Justin D. Garcia is an author and professor of Cultural Anthropology. In his chapter, “Race and Ethnicity” which is featured in the open publication, *Perspectives: An Open Invitation to Cultural Anthropology,* he writes about his own personal experiences (and professional fascination) with presumptive conclusions regarding his race and ethnicity. Below is an exert from that chapter.

> Throughout my life, my physical appearance has provided me with countless unique and memorable experiences that have emphasized the significance of race and ethnicity as socially constructed concepts in America and other societies. My fascination with this subject is therefore both personal and professional; a lifetime of questions and assumptions from others regarding my racial and ethnic background have cultivated my interest in these topics. I noticed that my perceived race or ethnicity, much like beauty, rested in the eye of the beholder as individuals in different regions of the country (and outside of the United States) often perceived me as having different specific heritages. For example, as a teenager living in York County, Pennsylvania, senior citizens and middle-aged individuals usually assumed I was “white,” while younger residents often saw me as “Puerto Rican” or generically “Hispanic” or “Latino.” When I lived in Philadelphia, locals mostly assumed I was “Italian American,” but many Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and Dominicans, in the City of Brotherly Love often took me for either “Puerto Rican” or “Cuban.”
>
> I have a rather ambiguous physical appearance—a shaved head, brown eyes, and a black mustache and goatee. Depending on who one asks, I have either a “pasty white” or “somewhat olive” complexion, and my last name is often the single biggest factor that leads people on the East Coast to conclude that I am Puerto Rican. My experiences are examples of what sociologists Michael Omi and Howard Winant (1986) referred to as “racial commonsense”—a deeply entrenched social belief that another person’s racial or ethnic background is obvious and easily determined from brief glances and can be used to predict a person’s culture, behavior, and personality. Reality, of course, is far more complex. One’s racial or ethnic background cannot necessarily be accurately determined based on physical appearance alone, and an individual’s “race” does not necessarily determine his or her “culture,” which in turn does not determine “personality.” Yet, these perceptions remain.

High Culture & Pop Culture

Do you prefer listening to opera or hip hop music? Do you like watching horse racing or NASCAR? Do you read books of poetry or celebrity magazines? In each pair, one type of entertainment is considered high-brow and the other low-brow. Sociologists use the term **high culture** to describe the pattern of cultural experiences and attitudes that exist in the highest class segments of a society. People often associate high culture with intellectualism, political power, and prestige. In America, high culture also tends to be associated with wealth. Events considered high culture can be expensive and formal—attending a ballet, seeing a play, or listening to a live symphony performance.

The term **popular culture** refers to the pattern of cultural experiences and attitudes that exist in mainstream society. Popular culture events might include a parade, a soccer (football) game, or the season finale of a television show. Rock and pop music—“pop” is short for “popular”—are part of popular culture. Popular culture is often expressed and spread via commercial media such as radio, television, movies, the music industry, publishers, and corporate-run websites. Popular culture is known and accessible to most people: you can share a discussion of favorite football teams with a new coworker or comment on *Game of Thrones* (or another popular show) when making small talk in line at the grocery store. But if you tried to launch into a deep discussion on the classical Greek play *Antigone*, few members of society today would be familiar with it.

Although high culture may be viewed as superior to popular culture, the labels of high culture and popular culture vary over time and place. Shakespearean plays, considered pop culture when they were written, are now part of our society’s high culture. Five hundred years from now, will our descendants associate *Breaking Bad* with the cultural elite?

Influences in “Pop” Culture

Anthropologists sometimes turn to unconventional information sources as they explore gendered culture, including popular television commercials. Interestingly, the 2015 Super Bowl commercials produced for the Always feminine product brand also focused on gender themes in its #Likeagirl campaign, which probed the damaging connotations of the phrases “throw like a girl” and “run like a girl” by first asking boys and girls to act out running and throwing, and then asking them to act out a girl running and throwing. A companion clip further explored the negative impacts of anti-girl messages, provoking dialogue among Super Bowl viewers and in social media spaces (though, ironically, that dialogue was intended to promote consumption of feminine products). As the clips remind us, while boys and men play major roles in perceptions related to gender, so do the women who raise them, often reinforcing gendered expectations for play and aspiration. Of course, women, like men, are **enculturated** into their culture’s gender ideology. Both girls and boys — and adults — are profoundly influenced by popular culture.

Counterculture

Sociologists distinguish subcultures from **countercultures**, which are a type of subculture that rejects some of the larger culture’s norms and values. In contrast to subcultures, which operate relatively smoothly within the larger society, countercultures might actively defy larger society by developing their own set of rules and norms to live by, sometimes even creating communities that operate outside of greater society.

Counterculture in the USA: 1950's-1970's

In the United States, the counterculture of the 1960s became identified with the rejection of conventional social norms of the 1950s. Counterculture youth rejected the cultural standards of their parents, especially with respect to racial segregation and initial widespread support for the Vietnam War.

As the 1960s progressed, widespread tensions developed in American society that tended to flow along generational lines regarding the war in Vietnam, race relations, sexual mores, women's rights, traditional modes of authority, and a materialistic interpretation of the American Dream. Hippies became the largest countercultural group in the United States. The counterculture also had access to a media eager to present their concerns to a wider public. Demonstrations for social justice created far-reaching changes affecting many aspects of society.

The counterculture in the United States lasted from roughly 1964 to 1973 — coinciding with America's involvement in Vietnam — and reached its peak in 1967, the "Summer of Love. " The movement divided the country: to some Americans, these attributes reflected American ideals of free speech, equality, world peace, and the pursuit of happiness; to others, the same attributes reflected a self-indulgent, pointlessly rebellious, unpatriotic, and destructive assault on America's traditional moral order.

The counterculture collapsed circa 1973, and many have attributed its collapse to two major reasons: First, the most popular of its political goals — civil rights, civil liberties, gender equality, environmentalism, and the end of the Vietnam War — were accomplished. Second, a decline of idealism and hedonism occurred as many notable counterculture figures died, the rest settled into mainstream society and started their own families, and the "magic economy" of the 1960s gave way to the stagflation of the 1970s.

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CHAPTER REFLECTIONS

Continue Learning

1. Disney's Pocahontas "Colors of the Wind Song" presents many of the stereotypes of the ecologically noble savage. What are these stereotypes? Where else do we see these kinds of depictions?
2. How do you use cleaning rituals to save lives? Read this New York Times article entitled, "Warning: Habits May Be Good for You" and discuss how rituals can be created and adopted in order to change (in this case, life-saving) behaviours.
3. Listen to CBC's Under The Influence Podcast with Terry O'Reilly featuring several marketing examples where rituals have formed consumer habits, cementing the success of many products and brands.
4. Cultural gatekeepers in Hollywood have been criticized for decades about failing to accurately represent society in their films: "white-washing" is the term used to describe the over-representation of white actors in roles that should be filled by people of colour—especially films in a historical context. Explore the work of Dylan Marrow in his blog titled "Every Single Word" that represents a curation of Hollywood films carefully edited down to only the speaking lines of people of colour (non-white actors). What impact do Hollywood films have on informing culture and influence marketing? Why should this form of under/over-representation be a concern for marketers? What responsibility do marketers have to reset the balance?
5. In this book, content contributor Mariah Gladstone generously shares with us an Indigenous perspective on the harm caused by racist mascots. Listen to Jesse Wente's interview with the CBC's Matt Galloway about why it's time to change all racist team names. How are sports marketers failing to inform and influence culture by continuing to market racist names and mascots? Research the #NotYourMascot campaign to learn more.
6. In 2014, Business Insider identified some of the most egregious examples of racism in marketing and advertising. Discuss marketing's role and responsibility in marketing with honesty, authenticity, and integrity. How does racism in marketing impact culture and society?
7. Rituals and rights of passage are important features in identifying and understanding a culture. Read Métis writer Chelsea Vowel's blog post about the significance of the Hudson Bay Company's Blanket and consider the importance of ritual and right of passage in her experience.
8. Contrast and compare the above example with a different perspective on the symbolism surrounding the HBC blanket. Read about and listen to the Secret Life of Canada's podcast about the HBC blanket How do these two very different examples, experiences, and perspectives demonstrate that pan-Indigenous views are problematic? What lesson should be understood by marketers in these contexts?
9. Discuss the #SeeHer campaign and why cultural gender-bias in advertising is now an urgent topic of

discussion. What brands are committed to addressing gender-bias?

10. What implications do gender stereotypes in advertising have on the youngest members of society—children? How does marketing inform a child's understanding of gender roles? Consider this video from MullenLowe Group and discuss what changes need to occur in marketing to "redraw the balance".
11. CBC's Under the Influence podcast is an excellent resource for specific marketing topics explored by marketing and advertising legend, Terry O'Reilly. Listen to, "Guys and Dolls: Gender Marketing" (27 minutes) and discuss the impact it has on society with respect to cultural norms. Do you see this trends continuing or do you anticipate a move towards more neutral marketing representation in the future?
12. Which brands are targeting consumers who identify as part of a LGBTQ2S+ sub-culture? Subaru has long been analyzed a car company that identified early on that LGBTQ2S+ target markets fulfilled all of the features attractive to marketers: a growing segment; high disposable income; purchasing power; reachable by advertising & promotions. Discuss Subaru's target marketing strategy and seek out more advertisements that demonstrate their directed ads towards LGBTQ2S+ consumers. How do Subaru's ads reflect a changes to family structure?
13. How many people can remember a famous TV commercial by Volkswagen featuring two college-aged men driving around in a VW bug set to the "dah dah dah dah" music? Discuss the significance of this ad and when the advertiser chose to air it for the first time (hint: during the famous "coming out" episode of Ellen). How does VW's ad reflect a change to family structure?
14. Who is actively marketing to the transgender consumer market? Do you recall Nike's ad during the 2016 Rio Olympics that features a transgender athlete? What kind of impact does inclusive advertising have on society and culture's understanding of transgenders?
15. When we discuss ethnic sub-cultures, we consider how members share common cultural and/or genetic ties which are recognized by both its members (and others) as a distinct category. Canada is regarded as a heterogeneous society (multi-ethnic)—but do Canadian brands reflect this accurately and honestly? Discuss how Canadian brands are succeeding and failing to be inclusive and reflective of a multi-ethnic society (consider how MEC was confronted with their failure as a leading outdoor brand to feature non-white models in their advertisements).
16. Read about how the Gap responded to criticism (and extreme racism) around their 2011 "Make Love" campaign. What other mainstream brands are representing ethnic sub-cultures in their marketing?
17. Create a timeline of cultural appropriation in fashion (or makeup, or body art, or music, …) and discussion the various cultural elements that the dominant culture has taken without consent/credit; used inappropriately; or taken out of proper respectful context from the original culture. This can also be created using H5P. Read through this fashion history timeline for inspiration and ideas.
18. From Coachilla to Justin Bieber to nearly any Kardashian, there are numerous examples of celebrities who have been accused of cultural appropriation. It seems the examples in fashion are almost

endless. Explore the following links to engage in a meaningful discussion on cultural appropriation and consider how marketing plays a critical role in eliminating harmful practices like this one.

- A very well-constructed Twitter thread by Dr. Adrienne Keene about Native Headdresses not being a garment or fashion statement
- Teen Vogue's video, "Dear White Women, We Need to Talk About Coachella"
- Chelsea Vowel's blogpost, "An Open Letter to Non-Natives in Headdresses"
- Teen Vogue's article and video, "Cultural Appropriation at Halloween: My Culture Is Not a Costume"

Glossary

ABCs of Attitudes

The three components to an attitude are, A=Affect (how we feel about something); B=Behaviour (how we act towards something); and C=Cognition (what we think about something).

Absolute threshold

A term that refers to the smallest (minimal) level of a stimuli (e.g. sound; sight, taste) that can still be detected at least half of the time.

Acculturation

The process of adopting and adjusting to a new and often prevailing (dominant) cultural environment.

AIOs

A=Activities; I=Interests; O=Opinions...the AIO's constitute the foundation and building blocks of a person's attitudes which typically define our lifestyle choices as consumers.

Anti-brand community

This term is characterized as a group of individuals who are bonded together by their mutual dislike, distrust, and aversion of a brand or product.

Archetypes

Carl Jung (1875-1961) theoretical work on personalities included archetypes, which he believed to be "ancestral memories" reflecting the common experiences of people all over the world. His explanation of archetypes included a strong belief that they were mostly biological and handed down to us. More recent research on archetypes suggests that they come from our lived experiences and reflect our cultural characteristics (and are not biological or handed down).

Aspirational reference groups

These groups of people are not known to consumers personally, but instead represent a set of ideals that others admire usually because of their popularity and celebrity status.

Assimilation

The voluntary or forceful abandonment of one's own culture, namely -- values, customs, traditions, language, and identity -- with the intent to adopt those of the prevalent (dominant) culture.

Associative learning

An aspect of behavioural learning theory involving the repetitive pairing of stimuli over time in order to form a strong connection (association) between two items.

Atmospherics

A situational factor/influence on consumer decision making, atmospherics is the sum total of all physical aspects in a retail environment that the retailer controls and should monitor to create a pleasing shopping experience for customers.

Attention

Following "exposure" in the perceptual process, Attention describes the dedicated effort and focus we give to incoming sensory information (e.g. sights, sounds).

Attitudes

The positive or negative, long-lasting evaluations we have regarding people and things.

Balance theory

Fritz Heider's Balance Theory is a framework that can predict attitude and behavioural change. In marketing, this framework demonstrates the importance of consistency (balance) within the triad, and how consumers will seek to harmonize their values, beliefs, and perceptions when they experience cognitive inconsistencies.

Behavioural learning theories

Learning theories that focus on how people respond to external events or stimuli.

Biases

Beliefs, feelings, and behaviour that express hostility or exclude members of groups or entire groups themselves.

Brand

A brand consists of all tangible and intangible components that form a unique identity, thus distinguishing one entity from another, particularly in a competitive category.

Brand associations

This concept refers to the thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, experiences, believes, and attitudes from the consumer's experience that become tied to a brand. Anything linked in our memory to a brand - positive or negative - that forms a lasting impressions in the mind of a consumer.

Brand awareness

The sum of all points of contact ("touchpoints") with a brand.

Brand community

This term is characterized as a group of passionate and enthusiastic consumers who are bonded together by their interest in a brand or product.

Brand experience

The sum of all points of contact ("touchpoints") with a brand.

Brand image

This is a symbolic construct (representation) that is created in our minds based on all the information and expectations we associate with a particular brand.

Brand loyalty

This term refers to a consumer's commitment to repurchase a particular brand despite having other options available to them.

Brand personality

A brand's personality is comprised of human-like characteristics that convey traits consumers can identity with themselves: warmth; excitement; comfort; edginess; old-fashion; etc. Brand personality is created to persuade and influence consumer decision making based on the belief that consumers will purchase brands that are aligned with some aspect of their self-concept or self-complexity.

Cause-related marketing

A collaborative and mutually beneficial relationship between a business and a non-profit organization that provides the business with greater access to consumer markets (in pursuit of sales, growth, and profit) and the non-profit with more exposure and awareness of its cause.

Central route to persuasion

This aspect of the Elaboration Likelihood Model identifies that messages requiring extensive mental processing are more likely to result in long-term attitude changes, especially with an audience who is motivated and highly involved with the subject/topic.

Classical conditioning (Pavlovian conditioning)

A type of behavioural learning theory developed by Ivan Pavlov that explains how our responses (behaviour) to one situation can inform our response (behaviour) to a new situation.

Cognitive biases

Described as errors in memory or judgement and often an inaccurate perception of something.

Cognitive dissonance

A type of cognitive inconsistency, this term describes the discomfort consumers may feel when their beliefs, values, attitudes, or perceptions are inconsistent or contradictory to their original belief or understanding. Consumers with cognitive dissonance related to a purchasing decision will often seek to resolve this internal turmoil they are experiencing by returning the product or finding a way to justify it and minimizing their sense of buyer's remorse.

Cognitive dissonance (post-purchase dissonance)

Also known as "consumer remorse" or "consumer guilt", this is an unsettling feeling consumers may experience post-purchase if they feel their actions are not aligned with their needs.

Cognitive learning theories

Learning theories that focus on how people learn from mental processes and by observing others.

Conformity

Both social comparison and informational social influence often lead to conformity, which is a long-lasting change in beliefs, opinions, and behaviours that are consistent with the people around us.

Conscientious consumerism

A term used to describe consumers who act with a heightened sense of awareness, care, and sensitivity in their purchasing decisions. This form of consumerism centres the principles of sustainability and may either present as performative or values-based decision making.

Consumer capitalism

A term that describes a material focus on consumption where (corporate) profit maximization is achieved as class structures and inequalities are exploited.

Consumer hyperchoice

A term that describes a purchasing situation in which a consumer is faced with an excess of choice that makes decision making difficult or nearly impossible.

Consumer involvement

A consumer's involvement level reflects how personally important or interested they are in purchasing/consuming an item.

Counterculture

A type of subculture that actively opposes and rejects norms, values, and symbols that reflect the larger culture in which it exists.

Crowding

A situational factor/influence on decision making, a crowded store may result in a lower number of visitors converting to buyers, but it may also create "herd behaviour" in which some customers are more likely to purchase when part of a crowd.

Cultural appropriation

When features of a non-dominant culture (fashion, artifacts, food, language, etc.) are taken and used without consent, respect, and handled inappropriately further entrenching dangerous stereotypes about the non-dominant culture. Cultural appropriation also occurs when the dominant culture engages in "whitewashing" or exploits the cultural object in order to benefit from it while justifying the act as a way to "honour" the less dominant culture.

Cultural norms

A set of standards and often unspoken 'rules' that members of society collectively agree upon to serve as a basis of what's consider acceptable behaviour.

Culture

The sum of learned beliefs, values, and customs that help us know how to behave as members of society.

Customization

A marketing strategy used to increase involvement and engagement levels with consumers, customization involves the personalization of products for large groups of homogenous (similar) consumers.

Customs

A term that describes a traditional and widely accepted way of behaving in a given society. Customs have existed for many generations and are passed down to the next one.

De-ethnicization

When a product becomes part of "mainstream society" (dominant culture) through the removal or disassociation with its original ethnic group (or culture).

De-sacralization

The removal of sacred symbolism when an object becomes absorbed by mainstream society (dominant culture).

Defense mechanisms

Freud believed that when the Ego seeks to find balance between the Id and the Superego, defense mechanisms are enacted to help us reduce tension. Freud believed that our unconscious mind creates these unconscious efforts to protect the ego from being overwhelmed by anxiety.

Deindividuation

The loss of individual self-awareness and accountability when an individual is absorbed into a larger group.

Descriptive norms

While norms give us a sense of how we might behave in accordance with society, descriptive norms refer to our perception of how people actually behave.

Detachment

The mental and emotional separation a consumer undergoes with an unwanted or no longed needed product; this is considered the "invisible" part of divestment.

Differential threshold ("JND")

The differential threshold - also known as the JND or just noticeable difference - refers to the minimum difference in intensity that can be detected between two objects (e.g. the size of two bags of potato chips or the subtle difference in two logo designs).

Discretionary income

Discretionary income represents the amount of money we have left over to invest, save, or spend, after paying personal income taxes and necessities. Young adults often have to pay necessities like student loans and credit card debts, but also may pay less taxes, all of which effects their discretionary income. Discretionary income is different than disposable income because it takes necessary expenses into consideration.

Discrimination

A type of behavioural bias that results in the deliberate exclusion of others.

Disposable income

Disposable income represents the amount of money we have left over to invest, save, or spend, after paying personal income taxes. Seniors and retirees typically have more disposable income due to paying lower personal income taxes. Discretionary income is derived from disposable income.

Disposable products

These are products that are designed for single use, which means they get discarded ("disposed of") immediately after use. Disposable products can have severely negative consequences on the environment if sustainability isn't factored into disposal options.

Disposal

The process of discarding (getting rid of) something we no longer need or want. The act of throwing something away.

Disposition

The physical separation a consumer undergoes with an unwanted or no longed needed product; this is considered the "visible" part of divestment.

Divestment

This term refers to the final stage of consumption after a product has been used and is no longer wanted or needed by the consumer. Divestment is comprised of disposition and detachment.

Drives/Drive theory

Drives represent the "tension" we feel when our body is out of balance, for example, due to hunger. Hunger is therefore a "drive state": drives represent physiological characteristics, or, things that we feel, and are motivated to resolve because they are essential to our survival.

Elaboration likelihood model

This models examines two different ways persuasion can be achieved (central route; peripheral route) depending on how motivated the audience is by the message and how much thinking (mental processing) needs to be done with respect to the contents of the message.

Enacted norms

These norms are endorsed by one's own culture and are expressed as explicit rules of behaviour.

Encoding

Describes the process of converting our experiences into memories.

Enculturation

The way in which people learn about culture and shared cultural knowledge.

Ethnic group

A distinct group of people with a shared ancestry, identity, and heritage who will often share a common language, religious or spiritual practices, patterns of dress, diet, customs, and holidays.

Ethnocentric consumer

These consumers perceive their own culture or country's goods as being superior to others'.

Ethnocentrism

Consumers who select brands because they represent their own culture and country of origin are making decisions based on ethnocentrism. Consumers who are quick to generalize and judge brands based on ethnocentrism are engaging their heuristics.

Evaluation of alternatives

The third stage of the Consumer Decision Making Process, the evaluation of alternatives takes place when a consumer establishes criteria to evaluate the most viable purchasing option.

Evoke set

A small set of "go-to" brands that consumers will consider as they evaluate the alternatives available to them before making a purchasing decision.

Expectancy theory

This theory works very differently from Drive theory because it explains our motivations when desirable outcomes are achieved through our own effort and performance.

Exposure

This term refers to the vast amount of stimuli that surround us and that we come into contact with on a regular basis. In marketing this refers to the massive amount of commercial advertisements, commercials, products, branding, packaging, etc.

Extended self

This term describes situations in which consumers further identify their self-concept through their purchasing decisions and consumption choices.

Extrinsic brand attributes

These are the features and characteristics of a brand that enable consumers to form associations with it and give it meaning - such as a brand's price, its packaging, label, name, logo, and image.

Extrinsic motivation

The tendency to take action and pursue a goal (motivation) because the outcome and achievement itself will be beneficial.

Family branding

A branding structure in which the brand focus is on the company name which appears on all the products (services) offered by that company. The association between products and corporate entity are strong and visible.

Family lifecycle

The family lifecycle represents the various stages we pass through from early adulthood to retirement. At each stage of the lifecycle consumer preferences are defined by different needs and wants and influenced by different forces.

Fast fashion

A term that describes the quick process of events that take place when fashion items go from the "catwalk" to retail outlets that mainly market to, and serve, mainstream consumers. Fast fashion has negative consequences on disposal and is an unsustainable process that leads to a high volume of waste as well as concerns about the ethical practices in clothing production.

Five Factor Model of Personality

This model identifies five fundamental personality trait dimensions (characteristics) that are believed to be stable across time, cross-culturally shared, and an explanation for most human behaviour. Those five traits are: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism.

Freudian theory

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), an Austrian neurologist and founder of psychoanalysis, engaged in research and work that has shaped and influenced our contemporary understanding of personality and psychology. Freudian theory states that our behaviours are predetermined by our unconscious motivations.

Full/extended decision making process

Consumer purchases made when a (new) need is identified and a consumer engages in a more rigorous evaluation, research, and alternative assessment process before satisfying the unmet need.

Gatekeeper

People who have the power and ability to determine what information gets shared, what stories get told, what movies get made, and what television shows get produced. Gatekeepers control access to information and the dissemination of that information to the public.

Gender

A social and historical construct resulting in a set of culturally invented expectations of a 'role' (often male or female) one may assume, learn, and perform.

Goals

A goal represents how we would like things to turn out, also known as a desired end state.

Green marketing

The design, development, and promotion of products that serve to minimize negative and harmful effects on the environment. Green marketing is most visibly evident through packaging design, labeling, and messaging (e.g. "green dish soap").

Greenwashing

A term used to describe an act of hypocrisy whereby a company proclaims to engage in "green" business (marketing) practices, but is actually engaging in harmful and devastating impacts on the environment. Those impacts may be hidden, disguised, or purposely misrepresented to consumers (and broader group of stakeholders) so the company can win favour with conscientious consumers.

Guerilla or Experiential Marketing

A type of experiential advertising that is highly engaging, unanticipated, unique, unconventional, innovative, and designed with the intent to be memorable and become viral.

Halo effect

When we experience one positive trait about a person we may assume other positive features or traits as well.

Hedonic needs

Needs that are considered luxurious and highly desirable.

Hedonic shopping experience

The family lifecycle represents the various stages we pass through from early adulthood to retirement. At each stage of the lifecycle consumer preferences are defined by different needs and wants and influenced by different forces.

Heuristics

Also known as "mental shortcuts" or "rules of thumb", heuristics help consumers by simplifying the decision-making process.

High culture

A term used to describe cultural experiences, symbols, and attitudes that are often associated with wealthy of 'high class' members of society.

High involvement

High involvement decision making typically reflects when a consumer who has a high degree of interest and attachment to an item. These items may be relatively expensive, pose a high risk to the consumer (can't be exchanged or refunded easily or at all), and require some degree of research or comparison shopping.

Homeostasis

A term used to describe a natural (and harmonious) state of our body's systems. Homeostasis is achieved when a need or goal is satisfied (e.g. when we're hungry we eat; when we're tired we sleep).

Hype

Hype is a form of intense publicity and promotion that helps drive up the value of consumer goods and services. Consumers and resellers use social media platforms to exchange information and discuss products that are rare and sought-after are "hyping up" a good, which often results in a higher resale price.

Id, ego, superego

Freud believed the mind was divided into three main components: the "Id" (the part that forms our impulsive behaviour); the "Superego" (the part that forms our consciousness and sense of morality); and, the "Ego" (the part that forms our sense of reality and balances the Id and Superego).

Ideal self

An idealized version of ourselves that is based on several factors including our experiences, the expectations we feel society has of us, and the traits we admire in others.

Impulse buying

A type of purchase that is made with no previous planning or thought.

Individualism

A cultural orientation that emphasizes personal freedom, self-expression, and individual decision-making.

Inept set

The brands a consumer would not pay any attention to during the evaluation of alternatives process.

Inert set

The brands a consumer is aware of but indifferent to, when evaluating alternatives in the consumer decision making process. The consumer may deem these brands irrelevant and will therefore exclude them from any extensive evaluation or consideration.

Inertia

Purchasing decisions made out of habit.

Influencer

An influencer is characterized as someone who is well-connected; has influence on consumers' decision making; has both reach and impact; and is identified as a trendsetter.

Information search

The second stage of the Consumer Decision Making Process, information search takes place when a consumer seeks relative information that will help them identify and evaluate alternatives before deciding on the final purchase decision.

Informational social influence

When we change change our opinions and behaviours in order to conform to the people closest to us, we use the term "informational social influence". We justify our changed opinions because we believe those people have accurate and reliable information that also serves our contexts.

Interpretation

Following exposure and attention, Interpretation is the third part of the perceptual process and occurs when we give meaning to information and messages that have gained our attention.

Intrinsic brand attributes

These are the functional features and characteristics of a brand - such as its shape, performance, and capacity.

Intrinsic motivation

The tendency to take action and pursue a goal (motivation) because the process itself will be beneficial and fulfilling.

Lateral cycling

A feature of product disposal that involves selling, donating, or giving away unwanted items in an effort to keep them from ending up as waste in landfills. Lateral cycling is a more sustainable act of disposal than just throwing something away.

Layout (store layout)

An interior variable, the layout refers to the design of the space inside a store as well as the placement of displays and other items customers come in contact with.

Licensing

A branding strategy that involves the licensing of a brand name (to other companies) outside of its own product offering in order to bring more exposure to the brand.

Lifestyle marketing

Marketing campaigns designed to influence, persuade, and appeal to a consumer's "AIO's", values, worldviews, and personality identity.

Limen

A threshold (like an invisible line) that separates what one can perceive and what one can't perceive: stimuli (sounds, sights) that fall below the limen are considered "subliminal" (not detectable, or below our own awareness level) and stimuli above the limen we detect and are aware of.

Limited problem solving

Consumers engage in limited problem solving when they have some information about an item, but continue to gather more information to inform their purchasing decision. This falls between "low" and "high" involvement on the involvement continuum.

Location

Store location is a situational factor/influence on decision making. Retailers who are located where consumers expect and want them to be, such as in high pedestrian traffic zones, tend to enjoy a higher volume of customers.

Long-term memory

The "LTM" is a system that enables us to store information for a longer period of time.

Looking glass self

Sometimes our self-concept is formed through our interactions with others and in these interactions we come to see, describe, and evaluate ourselves based on their reaction's to us.

Low involvement

Low involvement decision making typically reflects when a consumer who has a low level of interest and attachment to an item. These items may be relatively inexpensive, pose low risk (can be exchanged, returned, or replaced easily), and not require research or comparison shopping.

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" (1943) is a motivational theory that places 5 needs in a hierarchical structure. It begins with basic (physiological) needs; safety needs; social needs; ego needs; and ends with self-actualization needs. Maslow's theory was based on the belief that lower-level needs should be attended to before upper-level needs could be.

Match-up hypothesis

The degree to which a source and a brand are objectively perceived as a "good match" because the source's image and the brand's position are a good fit and logically aligned.

Materialism

The prioritization of possessions (material possessions), money, and the consumer purchases above and beyond relationships, spirituality, and personal well-being.

Memory decay

The fading of memories over the passage of time.

Mere exposure

This term describes our preference to like things that we have seen more often, or more frequently. Increased and frequent exposure to a product may result in our developing a preference for the product that we wouldn't otherwise have.

Modeling

Related to observational learning (cognitive learning theory), modeling involves imitating the behaviour of others.

Mood

A situational factor/influence on decision making, a consumer's mood expresses a temporary state of mind and feeling at a particular moment. It can also be expressed as the predominant emotion we are feeling.

Motivation

The psychological energy, or driving force, that pushes us to pursue our goal(s).

Motivational conflicts

In a marketing context, these different types of conflicts exist when consumers are faced with making a choice between purchasing decisions that bring on different outcomes -- positive and/or negative. The three motivational conflicts are approach-approach; approach-avoidance; and, avoidance-avoidance.

Multi-attribute attitude model

This model provides a framework that can be used to measure consumers' attitudes towards specific products or services. The model identifies how consumer attitudes are informed by measuring and evaluating the attitudes of a product; the beliefs about those attributes; and the relative importance we give those attributes.

Multiculturalism

The existence of multiple ethnic groups living together in a mixed-ethnic society.

Myths

A story with symbolic elements that represent a culture's ideals.

Need recognition

The first stage of the Consumer Decision Making Process, need recognition takes place when a consumer identifies an unmet need.

Needs

A basic deficiency (lacking of) an essential item, such as food, water, and shelter.

Neo-Freudian theories

Neo-Freudian theories were developed by psychologist and psychoanalysis -- many of whom were students of Freud's. They all developed their own theories on personality which either built on Freud's work or challenged it completely. Erik Erikson, Carl Jung, and Karen Horney are three of those people.

Non-conformity

This term describes situations where an individual (or group of individuals) reject or fail to go along with the rules, laws, and social norms of a larger group or society.

Normative social influence

This term best describes situations in which we express opinions or take on behaviours that enable us to be accepted by others and avoid rejection or social isolation.

Norms

Norms can be considered unspoken rules that members of a society follow because they represent what is good and/or right and they inform us on how we should behave.

Nostalgia

An emotion that describes a longing for the past and often a romanticized version of what the past was actually like.

Observational learning

Related to cognitive learning, this type of learning occurs when people observe the behaviour, responses, and actions of others.

Operant/Instrumental conditioning

A type of behavioural learning theory that involves reinforcements.

Opinion leaders

These are people who have the ability to influence others; they often set trends and norms that others conform to.

Own-group preference

The tendency to favour members of our own group (or "in-group") over others who belong to different groups.

Perception

A term used to describe the process we undergo when we organize and interpret the sensations we experience. Perception gives us the ability to interpret meaning of what our sensory receptors are experiencing.

Perceptual defense

In a marketing context, this occurs when consumers distort or ignore advertising messages that we may feel are personally threatening, uncomfortable, or even culturally unacceptable.

Perceptual filters

When we take new information in, we organize and interpret it based on our prior experiences as well as our cultural norms. Perceptual filters help us make sense of new information and reduce anxiety when faced with the unknown (uncertainties).

Perceptual mapping

A visual and graphic display (e.g. often a grid) that illustrates the perceptions customers have of a group of competing brands.

Perceptual process

A process that begins when our sensory receptors (eyes, ears, tongue, nose, and skin) come in contact with sensory stimuli (sight, sounds, tastes, odours, and textiles) followed by the degree to which we pay attention to these stimuli and the meaning we draw from them (interpretation).

Perceptual system

A system informed by our senses and sensory memories that help us interpret and understand the environment around us.

Perceptual vigilance

In a marketing context, this occurs when consumers pay more attention (committed focus) to advertising messages that are relevant to our current state of being and/or meet our current unmet needs and wants.

Peripheral route to persuasion

This aspect of the Elaboration Likelihood Model identifies that messages requiring minimal mental processing result in short-term attitude changes, especially with an audience who is not motivated and has low involvement with the subject/topic.

Person-situation debate

This concept supports the belief that our personalities are not consistent from one situation to the next. The belief here is that our personalities (and subsequent behaviours) are shaped by situational factors (e.g. what is happening in the environment around us).

Persona

Carl Jung (1875-1961) proposed the idea of a persona, which he explained as a sort of "mask" that we adopt that represents compromise between our "true self" and the person society expects us to be.

Personality

A way to describe the various human characteristics that make us all different from one another.

Personality traits

Personality traits refer to the basic dimensions that make us all different from one another.

Personalization (individualization)

A marketing strategy used to increase involvement and engagement levels with consumers, personalization involves tailoring a product (or service) to meet the unique needs & wants of a specific consumer.

Persuasion

In marketing, persuasion is seen a process of creating messages that will change the beliefs, attitudes, and/or behaviours of a target audience (e.g. consumers).

Pinkwashing

Similar in spirit to "greenwashing", this term is used to describe an act of hypocrisy whereby a company aligns itself with a breast cancer fundraising endeavour (e.g. pink ribbon campaign) all the while producing products that are associated with the very causes of (breast) cancer itself. Brands that engage in pinkwashing may disguise or purposely misrepresent the (dangerous) ingredients in their products or the (unsafe and hazardous) working conditions used to bring the products to market in order to win favour with consumers who idealize the significance of the pink ribbon symbol.

Planned obsolescence

A deliberate act marketers and businesses take in designing, producing, and marketing products that become obsolete quickly, therefore triggering consumers to buy the "next version" as a replacement. Planned obsolescence has negative consequences on disposal and the environment when products aren't designed with sustainable disposal in mind. It is also an unsustainable practice that prioritizes profit over consumer and environmental well-being.

Popular (Pop) culture

A term used to describe cultural experiences, symbols, and attitudes that are often associated with members of mainstream society.

Positioning

A strategy developed by marketers to help influence how their target market (consumers) perceives a brand compared to the competition.

Positioning statement

The positioning statement reflects everything you’ve learned up to that point about how your product, service, or brand can best reach your target segment. As a statement, it explains exactly how you plan to provide value to those target customers.

Positive/Negative reinforcement

Related to operant (instrumental) conditioning, positive reinforcement involves providing rewards to encourage a particular type of behaviour. Negative reinforcement involves removing something in order to encourage a particular type of behaviour or action.

Prejudice

A type of emotional bias inflicted upon members outside of one's own social group.

Prevention orientation

A self-regulatory orientation we use emphasizes goals as things we should be doing as well as things we should be avoiding. This orientation focuses on safety, responsibility, and security needs as well as avoiding problems, dangers, and potential threats.

Principle of attitude consistency

This theory comes into effect when there is strong alignment among the ABC's of attitude: the relationship between what we feel (A), think (C), and how we act (B) are consistent and in close relation to one another.

Private acceptance

This is the result of conformity and is described as a real change in an individual's opinions.

Product line extensions

A branding and product strategy that occurs when marketers add new products to an existing brand in order to capitalize on the positive and popular brand equity already established within the market place.

Profane consumption

Consumer purchases that are comprised of 'every day' items that do not hold any sort of special or symbolic status.

Promotion orientation

A self-regulatory orientation we use emphasizes goals as things we are hopeful about as well as things that bring accomplishment and advancement to our needs. This orientation focuses on things that we want to do that will bring us pleasure and positive outcomes.

Proximity

The term describes the extent to which someone or something else is near to us.

Psychographic segmentation

A marketing activity that involves the profiling of a market segment based on characteristics such as AIO's, personality, traits, lifestyle, and values. Psychographic segmentation undergoes a detailed and close examination of consumers with respect to their motivations, values, and media consumption habits.

Race

Race is a social construct that defines different groups of humans based on arbitrary characteristics that can be related to physical and/or biological traits. These traits then are used to distinguish groups of humans from one another.

Recycling

Recycling involves the repurposing and transformation of discarded/disposed products (that would otherwise be thrown away) into something that has a different purpose. Recycling turns waste into reusable materials.

Reference group

A group of people that is often made up on opinion leaders who have influence on the attitudes, opinions, and behaviours of others.

Reference groups

The groups of people in our lives that we use for social comparisons. Reference groups are used in social comparison theory.

Repositioning

This process involves changing the positioning of a brand so that the target market perceives the brand differently than before and anticipates different expectations and experiences compared to the competition.

Retrieval

The process of recalling or reactivating memories that have been stored away.

Rite(s) of passage

A culturally-significant event or ritual that (often) marks an important time, or transition, in one's life.

Rituals

A pattern of behaviour that is often in a fixed-sequence and repeated regularly and gives added meaning and significance to a particular culture.

Routine response behaviour

This concept describes when consumers make low-involvement decisions that are "automatic" in nature and reflect a limited amount of information the consumer has gathered in the past.

Sacralization

A process that describes when an everyday item takes on a sacred status.

Salience

Items that have salience are those that we deem attractive and worthy of our attention.

Schemas

Also referred to as "mental categories" and patterns of knowledge, schemas provide meaning and structure to the information stored in our memories.

Schemata

Described as being like "databases" in our memory, the schemata contains stored information based on our past experiences that help us make sense of and interpret new experiences.

Scripts

A sequence or set of behaviours members of society are expected to follow or adhere to.

Selective attention

A term that describes our focused commitment to only some of the stimuli and senses that we come in contact with, based on what is relevant to our needs and/or interests.

Selective distortion

A term used to describe situations in which people (consumers) interpret messages and information (advertisements/product labeling) in a way that supports their pre-existing beliefs.

Selective exposure

When we deliberately choose to come in contact with information from particular sources (e.g. social media, videos, advertisements, podcasts) we are engaging in selective exposure.

Selective retention

A term used to describe when we forget information, despite it being important for us to retain and interpret (e.g. public service announcements that may help us live a better life, but we do not retain because we are uncomfortable with the idea of confronting our habits and/or behaviours).

Self-affirmation theory

This theory suggests that people will try to reduce any threat to their own self-concept by focusing on (and affirming) their worth in a different and unrelated area.

Self-awareness

The degree of cognitive awareness we have about ourselves.

Self-complexity

This term explains the range in complexities some selves are compared to others. A more complex self suggests that we have several different ways of thinking about ourselves.

Self-concept

This term describes how we see, understand, describe, and evaluate ourselves.

Self-consciousness

This term describes the degree of self-awareness we experience when we are in situations that might make us feel uncomfortable (e.g. public judgement)and more aware of our self-concept.

Self-determination theory

This theory examines how our motivations and personality (internalized factors) inform our attitudes and behaviour in the absence of external influences (e.g. subjective norms, which contrasts the theory of planned behaviour).

Self-efficacy

A person's belief in their own ability to succeed in a particular situation, context, or environment.

Self-esteem

This term refers to the positive or negative feelings we have about ourselves. Self-esteem is most often determined by our own performance, appearance, and our relationships with others.

Self-schemas

This terms describes how an aging and more complex self-concept becomes organized into different categories of the self.

Semantic meaning

A term used to describe symbolic associations between two objects.

Sensation

The awareness we experience when our sensory receptors are engaged with the environment around us.

Sensory adaptation

This term describes a decreased sensity to stimulus (information/messages) after a long period of constant exposure. For consumers, this may be described as a form of (marketing/advertising) fatigue where they tune out (become less sensitive to) the same stimulus (ad) over time.

Sensory marketing

Sensory marketing involves engaging consumers with one or more of their senses (see, touch, taste, smell, hear) with the intention to capture their attention and store the sensory information for future processing.

Sensory memory

Temporary storage of information that we receive from our senses (ears, nose, eyes, tongue, body).

Sensory receptors

A term used to encompass our eyes, ears, tongue, nose, and skin which come into contact with sensory stimuli -- the environment around us -- made up of sights, sounds, tastes, odours, and textiles.

Sex-typed

Also referred to as "gender-typed", characterizes the suitability or appropriateness of stereotypical gendered products.

Short-term memory

Also known as "working memory", the "STM" stores small "chunks" of information for only a limited amount of time and has a limited capacity.

Simple/routine decision making process

Consumer purchases made when a need is identified and a habitual ("routine") purchase is made to satisfy that need.

Sleeper effect

A situation in which over time, people develop a changed attitude towards an object, without knowing the original source of the information that might have triggered the start of the change.

Social class

A term used to describe groups of people who have the same socio-economic status within society. Social class may be measured using income, education, and profession; however, classifications can often be incorrect because indicators might be misleading (e.g. someone with high school education can be a high income earner).

Social comparison

When we compare our opinions to those of the people around us, we are engaging in social comparisons. Informational social influence often follows social comparison.

Social comparison theory

This theory explains how we further define our self-concept by comparing ourselves to other people. The comparisons are based on two dimensions: superiority/inferiority and similarity/difference. We use reference groups for social comparison.

Social identity theory

The tendency to favour one's own 'in-group' over another's 'outgroup'.

Social impact

One of the dimensions of a sustainable business: an examination of a business's practices that relate to labour conditions as well as the entirety of its operations across that the supply chain to ensure those practices reflect social responsibility and ethical behaviour.

Social influence

Social influence occurs when our beliefs and behaviours begin to match those of the people we're closest to. This may be subtle or it may be something we seek out by asking our friends for their opinions.

Social models

These are people who might be considered of higher status or authority compared to the person observing them.

Social norms

These are socially accepted beliefs about what we do or should do in particular social contexts.

Source

In marketing, the source is often depicted as a spokesperson or representative of a brand or company and responsible for communicating messages about the brand to consumers.

Source attractiveness

The perceived social value of the source.

Source credibility

The perceived objectivity and trustworthiness of a source.

Source monitoring

A term used to describe the ability to accurately recall the source of a memory.

Star power

This term speaks to the influence celebrities (and other types of famous people, such as athletes) have on our consumer decision making. A brand that is promoted and represented by a well-known (and adored celebrity), consumers who have a positive attitude towards that celebrity are more likely to believe in the brand as well.

Stereotypes

A type of cognitive bias that is presented as a generalized belief about a group of people.

Stimuli

A smell, sound, object or anything else that engages our brain to pay attention and interpret what we have come in contact with in our environment.

Stimulus discrimination

The opposite of stimulus generalization, this concept explains how we respond different to stimuli that may be similar, but not identical.

Stimulus generalization

A term used to describe when people respond to stimuli in a certain way because it reminds them of the original stimulus. In marketing, it is the strategy behind the creation of copy-cat and look-alike brands.

Subculture

A group of people with common values, beliefs, language, experiences, etc. that exist within a much larger group (culture).

Subjective norms

The belief that you have the support and approval of the people important to you to carry out an action or behave in a particular way.

Subliminal perception/Subliminal advertising

The belief that "hidden messages" in marketing are effectively influencing consumers to engage in specific decision making behaviour (e.g. secret messages telling consumers to buy certain brands).

Symbol

A cultural symbol can be an object, word, or action that represents a culture, or something else specifically within a culture. Symbols can have cultural meaning and significance and may be used to show affiliation to a (political) party, group, or subculture.

Theory of planned behaviour

This theory suggests that our deep beliefs and values play a pivotal role in creating our attitudes and predicting our behaviour. When we combine a strong attitude with subjective norms and with our belief that we can perform a particular behaviour, these three things will predict our actual behaviour.

Time-starved

A term related to the situational factor/influence on decision making, "time", it conveys a sense of customer urgency to make purchases quickly and efficiently to meet their entire set of needs.

Transition zone

The space immediately inside a retail store where customers pass through before engaging with merchandise and sales representatives. The transition zone serves as a place where customers can orient themselves and plan their route in the store.

Upcycling

A process of product disposal that involves the repurposing of unwanted items that give them a "second life". Upcycling is a transformative process that takes an unwanted item and transforms it into a more functional or even attractive item than it once was. It is a more sustainable act of disposal than just throwing something away.

Utilitarian needs

Needs that are considered practical and useful.

Wants

Identifying specific and personal criteria on a need and how it should be fulfilled.

Warm-glow effect

The personal satisfaction we feel in engaging in "good acts" that help others. This effect may explain why some people behave altruistically (in charity of others) but it fails to capture the extent of the impact our actions have on others (e.g. whether or not our actions are meaningful and long-lasting). For this reason, warm-glow may be described as a sort of "selfish pleasure".

Weber’s Law

This law states that the differential threshold (the just noticeable difference) is a constant proportion (or ratio) of the original stimulus.

Accessibility Statement

Accessibility of This Textbook

The web version of this resource has been designed to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0, level AA. In addition, it follows all guidelines in Appendix A: Checklist for Accessibility of the *Accessibility Toolkit – 2nd Edition*. It includes:

- **Easy navigation**. This text has a linked table of contents and uses headings in each chapter to make navigation easy.
- **Accessible images**. All images in this text that convey information have alternative text and/or link to a longer text description. Images that are decorative have empty alternative text.
- **Accessible links**. All links use descriptive link text.
- **Accessible tables.** All tables include captions and have row and/or column headers.

Accessibility Checklist

Element	Requirements	Pass?
Headings	Content is organized under headings and subheadings that are used sequentially.	Yes
Images	Images that convey information include alternative text descriptions. These descriptions are provided in the alt text field, in the surrounding text, or linked to as a long description.	Yes
Images	Images and text do not rely on colour to convey information.	Yes
Images	Images that are purely decorative or are already described in the surrounding text contain empty alternative text descriptions. (Descriptive text is unnecessary if the image doesn't convey contextual content information.)	Yes
Tables	Tables include row and/or column headers that have the correct scope assigned.	Yes
Tables	Tables include a title or caption.	Yes
Tables	Tables do not have merged or split cells.	Yes
Tables	Tables have adequate cell padding.	Yes
Links	The link text describes the destination of the link.	Yes
Links	Links do not open new windows or tabs. If they do, a textual reference is included in the link text.	Yes
Links	Links to files include the file type in the link text.	No
Audio	All audio content includes a transcript that includes all speech content and relevant descriptions of non-speach audio and speaker names/headings where necessary.	N/A
Video	All videos include high-quality (i.e., not machine generated) captions of all speech content and relevant non-speech content.	No
Video	All videos with contextual visuals (graphs, charts, etc.) are described audibly in the video.	No
H5P	All H5P activities have been tested for accessibility by the H5P team and have passed their testing.	Yes
H5P	All H5P activities that include images, videos, and/or audio content meet the accessibility requirements for those media types.	Yes
Formulas	Formulas have been created using LaTeX and are rendered with MathJax.	N/A
Formulas	If LaTeX is not an option, formulas are images with alternative text descriptions.	N/A
Font	Font size is 12 point or higher for body text.	Yes
Font	Font size is 9 point for footnotes or endnotes.	Yes
Font	Font size can be zoomed to 200% in the webbook or eBook formats.	Yes

Known Accessibility Issues and Areas for Improvement

- The "Chapter Reflections" at the end of each chapter occasionally link to YouTube videos created

by other people. Many of these videos only have automatic captions and do not have audio descriptions. These are additional resources and not a part of the core content of the text.
- Some links to PDFs do not have "PDF" included in the link text. This is mostly confined to the attributions and reference section at the end of the chapters.

This statement was last updated on June 9, 2021.

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Versioning History

This page provides a record of edits and changes made to this book since its initial publication. Whenever edits or updates are made in the text, we provide a record and description of those changes here. If the change is minor, the version number increases by 0.01. If the edits involve substantial updates, the version number increases to the next full number.

The files posted by this book always reflect the most recent version. If you find an error in this book, please let us know.

Version	**Date**	**Change**	**Details**
1.00	June 25, 2021	Book published.	